NEDAs May Significantly Reduce Symptoms of Restless Leg Syndrome But Have Limiting Side Effects

by Pamela Jones, MA

Restless leg syndrome is a neurological disorder that causes uncomfortable sensations in the legs. The problem is more likely to occur during sleep which is troubling for many restless leg sufferers. Mild cases are treated with self-care and lifestyle changes. Severe cases are often treated with medication.

Researchers from the School of Pharmacy at the University of Connecticut set out to find answers about the benefits and risks of a type of medication called non-ergot dopamine agents (NEDAs). Through a review of several past studies the team determined that NEDAs appeared successful in treating restless leg symptoms, but the side effects led many to discontinue their treatment.

About the Study

A review was done examining 14 previous randomized, controlled trials on the use of NEDAs for restless leg syndrome. All the studied trials involved the comparison of the drug to a placebo. The study collected information on four different medications in the NEDAs group: ropinirole, pramipexole, rotigotine, and sumanire. 

When results from all the studies were combined, NEDAs were associated with higher benefits in relief of restless leg symptoms compared to placebo. More patients in the drug group compared to the placebo group stopped taking the drug because of side effect such as nausea, dizziness, somnolence, and fatigue.

How Does This Affect You?

This study did confirm the benefits of NEDAs but highlighted some of the side effects. If you have or suspect you have restless leg syndrome talk to your doctor about treatment options including non-pharmaceutical options.

RESOURCES:

American Academy of Family Physicians
http://familydoctor.org/

The Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation
http://www.rls.org/

REFERENCES:


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