

Editorial

Colchicine: Conventional and Contemporary Indications

Colchicine has been used for over two thousand years. Recently research studies have shed light on potential new indications. While colchicine is in fact an ancient drug, there is a lack of “big” data on its utilization in modern medicine.

Tsoucalas *et al.* [1] searches back in ancient Greek and Byzantine sources for documentation of colchicine utilization. While initially considered as an effective poison to “kill a rebellious slave, or a rival nobleman”, later on Late Greek antiquity its potential therapeutic aspects were recognised [1]. Karamanou M *et al.* [2] unveils the modern historical course of colchicine from distribution through empiric physicians (charlatans) in the 15th century to the contemporary pharmacopeia of the 19th century.

Colchicine exploits a plethora of pathophysiological pathways and is in general characterized by a relatively safe profile. Side effects are mainly of gastrointestinal origin, while toxicity is associated to doses multiple of the common therapeutic regimens. Angelidis C. *et al.* [3], review pharmacokinetics, mechanisms of action and side effects of colchicine.

Drosos E. *et al.* [4] reviews potential indications of colchicine in the fields of low-back pain, gliomas and stroke from the viewpoint of neurosurgery. Tsiygoulis G. *et al.* [5] review available data and ongoing studies in utilization of colchicine’s anti-inflammatory properties for prevention cerebral atherosclerotic events.

Marinaki S *et al.* [6] provide an overview of colchicine employment in a series of entities affecting the kidneys (fibrotic disorders, diabetic neuropathy, familial Mediterranean fever and amyloidosis, renal transplantation, hypertensive kidney disease, autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease, focal segmental glomerulosclerosis).

Colchicine as a treatment for gout, a classic indication, is comprehensively reviewed by Parcart T and Richette P [7]. Further, Lantinioti G. *et al.* [8] present current perspectives on indications of colchicine in autoinflammatory disorders (Familial Mediterranean Fever, Periodic fever with aphthous stomatitis, pharyngitis and adenitis, Behcet’s disease, Idiopathic recurrent acute pericarditis).

Finally, colchicine has been suggested as a means of primary prevention for post-operative atrial fibrillation. A series of randomized studies and meta-analyses have lately been available and are presented in detail by Vrachatis D. *et al.* [9]. Last, but not least, a “traditional” indication of colchicine, pericardial syndromes, is thoroughly reviewed by Lazaros G. *et al.* [10].

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