

VISN 5 MIRECC Research Abstract

Adjunctive Atomoxetine for Cognitive Deficits Associated with Schizophrenia Robert Conley, MD & Robert Buchanan, MD

Cognitive dysfunction associated schizophrenia is a well-established component of the illness and is important in determining functional outcomes of individuals with the disease. Second generation antipsychotics, such as risperidone and olanzapine, have provided modest improvement in these deficits yet significant impairment remains. Methods to further enhance cognitive function in patients with schizophrenia are warranted. Atomoxetine, a selective norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor, is an ideal pharmacological agent to target this system and has been found to be well tolerated in human trials. Atomoxetine increases the synaptic levels of norepinephrine in areas throughout the brain and selectively increases levels of dopamine in the prefrontal cortex. This pilot study will evaluate the efficacy of atomoxetine, when used in conjunction with second generation antipsychotics, to improve cognitive function in patients with schizophrenia. This will be a randomized, double blind, placebo controlled trial of atomoxetine in patients who are currently stabilized on a single second generation antipsychotic. A total of 30 patients will be recruited for this 8-week study and the primary outcome will be change in a neuropsychological battery composite score. Additionally positive and negative symptoms and safety will be evaluated.

Currently subjects are being enrolled in this study and recruitment is near the target sample size. Data will be analyzed once the study is completion.