

PSEUDOBULBAR AFFECT IN MS: EVALUATION OF BASELINE PATTERNS IN A DOUBLE-BLIND, PLACEBO-CONTROLLED STUDY

D. Wynn, S. McMillan, A. Corsino, A. Hepner

USA

Background: Pseudobulbar affect (PBA) is a neurological condition characterized by uncontrollable outbursts of laughter or crying incongruent or disproportionate to the individual's mood. It occurs in approximately 10% of MS patients. Although PBA pathophysiology is believed to involve a disruption within cortical, cerebellar, and brainstem functions, it is unclear at what point PBA develops in progressive neurologic conditions such as MS.

Methods: Adults with PBA secondary to MS or ALS were enrolled in US and Latin American centers. A Center for Neurologic Studies–Lability Scale (CNS-LS) score ≥ 13 was required. Of 326 subjects, 129 had MS. Additional data were obtained from a single US site in a retrospective chart review that included the Expanded Disability Status Scale (EDSS), MS types, and time from diagnosis.

Results: Twenty-two MS patients with PBA were enrolled at this single site, with an average baseline CNS-LS score of 23.9 (range 15–33). There appeared to be no relationship between EDSS scores and CNS-LS scores or PBA daily episode rates at baseline. However, the mean EDSS score in this patient cohort was 3.84 (range 2.5–6.0). Therefore, in sample, all MS patients with PBA had only mild to moderate physical disability at baseline.

Conclusions: Although controlled clinical trials may have selection bias toward relatively mild illness, MS patients appear to have PBA and neuropsychological deficits early in the disease.

This study and presentation were supported by Avanir Pharmaceuticals, Inc.