

**100. Medicines: to Drive or Not to Drive**

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**Background:** Since 1999, a pictogram (black car in a red triangle) is inserted on the box of medicines that can interfere with driving. It concerns one third of medicines sold in France (4,000 medicines). The French Medicine Agency recently established three new pictograms for three levels of risk, which will soon replace the current one.

**Objective:** To assess the patients' knowledge about the current pictogram and the medicines at risk for driving. The study will be renewed next year to evaluate the new pictograms. We present here the results concerning the current pictogram.

**Methods:** We conducted a cross-sectional study in an internal medicine department, from February, 15<sup>th</sup> to May, 31<sup>st</sup>. Consecutive patients were face-to-face interviewed using an anonymous questionnaire. Only patients aged over 18, living at home without aid, speaking French and able to answer questions were included.

**Results:** From the 225 patients eligible during the study period, 115 (51%) were included. (Reasons for exclusion were: not able to answer (33%), not present in the department (26%), dependant (20%), non French-speaking (12%), refusal (5%), age under 18 (4%).) The sex ratio was 0.6; mean age was 54.2 years (range: 19-90, median: 53); 91 subjects (79%) had a driving licence and 76 (66%) used to drive a car. Among these 115 patients, 46 (40%) knew the pictogram. Patients (90, i.e. 78%) knew that risks for driving are labelled on patient information leaflet; of these, 62 subjects (69%) could cite at least one medicine dangerous for driving. The medicines most commonly quoted were anxiolytics (30%), hypnotics (20%) and antidepressants (17%). 42 subjects (37%) thought to have taken medicines at risk for driving during the 30 days before hospitalisation, while they were 79 (69%) to have taken such medicines after checking in their medical chart. Among these 42 subjects, only 12 (29%) had received advices from their physicians and 22 (52%) adapted either driving habits or drug treatment.

**Discussion and conclusion:** Only 40% of patients were aware of the pictogram; but most patients were informed by reading the leaflet. Only a few of them took care of these warnings and modified their habits. New pictograms will probably help physicians and pharmacists to give advices to patients and better alert patients themselves.