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Effects of short-term citicoline treatment on acute cocaine intoxication and cardiovascular effects.

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Abstract

RATIONALE: The majority of pharmacotherapies proposed for cocaine dependence have been marginally effective and frequently have undesirable side effects. We recently demonstrated that short-term treatment with **citicoline** decreased self-reported desire to use cocaine in crack cocaine users.

OBJECTIVE: The present study was conducted to assess the safety of **citicoline** in combination with cocaine by investigating whether cocaine-induced cardiovascular and behavioral effects and cocaine plasma levels are altered by **citicoline** pretreatment.

METHODS: Eight healthy male and female volunteers who used cocaine on an occasional basis participated in this randomized, placebo-controlled, three-visit study. During all three visits, subjects received an acute intranasal dose of cocaine (0.9 mg/kg) and were continuously monitored for the ensuing 3.5 h. The first visit involved no pretreatment, and visits 2 and 3 were preceded by a 4-day pretreatment period of either **citicoline** (1 g/day) or placebo.

RESULTS: **Citicoline** pretreatment did not alter the cardiovascular, physiologic, or subjective effects of acute cocaine.

CONCLUSIONS: Although **citicoline** did not block the acute subjective effects of cocaine in a laboratory environment, the combined use of **citicoline** and a moderate dose of intranasal cocaine presented no added risk of cardiovascular effects. Further study is necessary to determine whether this medication (which is currently used to treat strokes) will be a useful adjunct to treat cocaine dependence.

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