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## Passionflower in the treatment of opiates withdrawal: a double-blind randomized controlled trial.

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### Abstract

**OBJECTIVE:** Clonidine-based therapies have been utilized as the main protocol for opiate detoxification for several years. However, detoxification with clonidine has its limitations, including lack of efficacy for mental symptoms. Accumulating evidence shows the efficacy of *Passiflora incarnata* extract in the management of anxiety. In our continuing study of traditional medicines, which have neurotropic effects, this plant had an anxiolytic effect, which may be used as an adjuvant agent in the detoxification of opiates by clonidine. We present the results of a double-blind randomized controlled trial of clonidine plus passiflora extract vs. clonidine plus placebo in the outpatient detoxification of 65 opiates addicts.

**METHODS:** A total of 65 opiates addicts were assigned randomly to treatment with passiflora extract plus clonidine tablet or clonidine tablet plus placebo drop during a 14-day double-blind clinical trial. All patients met the DSM IV criteria for opioid dependence. The fixed daily dose was 60 drops of passiflora extract and a maximum daily dose of 0.8 mg of clonidine administered in three divided doses. The severity of the opiate withdrawal syndrome was measured on days 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 14 using the Short Opiate Withdrawal Scale (SOWS).

**CONCLUSION:** Both protocols were equally effective in treating the physical symptoms of withdrawal syndromes. However, the passiflora plus clonidine group showed a significant superiority over clonidine alone in the management of mental symptoms. These results suggested that passiflora extract may be an effective adjuvant agent in the management of opiate withdrawal. However, a larger study to confirm our results is warranted.

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