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MODERN PHARMACOTHERAPY OFONYCHOMYCOSIS

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Introduction. Onychomycosis is a fungal infection of the toenails or fingernails that may involve any component of the nail unit, including the matrix, bed, or plate. Onychomycosis is a widespread disease. It accounts for half of all nail disorders. The incidence of onychomycosis has been reported to be 2-13% in North America, 6.5% in Canada and 3-8% in United Kingdom, Spain, and Finland. Onychomycosis affects persons of all races. The incidence of onychomycosis has been increasing, owing to such factors as diabetes, immunosuppression, and increasing age.

Aim. Reviewing of evidence-based guidelines and treatment recommendations for the management of onychomycosis.

Materials and methods. Investigation of medical guidelines from Medscape and MSD Manual Professional Edition.

Results and discussion. The goals of pharmacotherapy for onychomycosis are to reduce morbidity and to prevent complications. Medications for onychomycosis can be administered topically or orally. A combination of topical and systemic treatment increases the cure rate.

A systemic treatment is always required in proximal subungual onychomycosis and in distal lateral subungual onychomycosis involving the lunula region. Systemic treatment recommendations are as follows: Terbinafine as first line of treatment 250 mg once/day for 12 weeks (6 weeks for fingernail) achieves a cure rate of 75 to 80% (level A); Itraconazole as first line of treatment 200 mg twice/day, 1 week on, 3 weeks off, for 12 weeks achieves a cure rate of 40 to 50% (level A); Fluconazole may be an alternative in patients unable to tolerate terbinafine or itraconazole 150 mg once/week for 6-12 months (level B); combination treatment recommended if response to topical monotherapy is likely to be poor (level D).

White superficial onychomycosis and distal lateral subungual onychomycosis limited to the distal nail can be treated with a topical agent. Topical treatment recommendations are as follows: Amorolfine once/week for 9-12 months (6 months for fingernail) (level D); Ciclopirox is useful for patients in whom systemic therapy is contraindicated once/day for 48 weeks (level D); Efinaconazole once/day for 48 weeks (level D); Tavaborole once/day for 48 weeks (level D).

Conclusions. Systemic treatment is more effective than topical. A combination of systemic and topical treatment increases the cure rate.

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