A General Practitioners Perspective on Penicillin Allergy

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Documenting Penicillin Allergy: The Impact of Inconsistency

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Abstract

Background

Allergy documentation is frequently inconsistent and incomplete. The impact of this variability on subsequent treatment is not well described.

Objective

To determine how allergy documentation affects subsequent antibiotic choice.

Design

Retrospective, cohort study.
In our Practice

5500 patients

263 with a record of penicillin allergy

Around 5% prevalence
Problem 1

Penicillin allergy is often poorly recorded
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Drug Allergy and Intolerance - Add

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Recording:</th>
<th>Clinician:</th>
<th>In Practice</th>
<th>Read Term for Allergy:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 March 2012</td>
<td>Venus, Dr Fiona</td>
<td></td>
<td>14L..00 H/O: drug allergy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Drug:**
  - 

- **Read Term for Reaction:**
  - 

- **Reaction Type:**
  - Allergy

- **Severity:**
  - 

- **Certainty:**
  - 
Problem 2

Once recorded, the allergy label is rarely challenged
Problem 3

Patients with a penicillin allergy record, tend to have allergies/intolerances to other antibiotics too
Mrs Jones 63 years old

Coronary artery disease
AF
Type 2 diabetes

She drinks around 5-6 cans of cider a day

Metformin
Ramipril
Nitrates
Bisoprolol
Atorvastatin
Amlodipine
Warfarin
Mrs Jones says:
penicillin allergy was years ago and her mum told her she almost died, she came out in red blotches, couldn’t breath, and was taken to hospital, but in the car, not 999, and didn’t stay overnight.

Her GP record says:
17/03/2000 – Amoxicillin 500mg caps – “Non-specific viral rash” – “mod”
Mr Davies 73 years old

Obese – BMI 40
Coronary artery disease
OA hips and knees
Depression

Opiates
Ramipril
Nitrates
Bisoprolol
Atorvastatin
Citalopram
Mrs Williams  56 years old

AF
Breast cancer 5 years ago → mastectomy
COPD (FEV1/FVC = 55%)
Coronary Artery Disease
Depression
Fibromyalgia
IBS.....
Mrs Williams  56 years old

AF
Breast cancer 5 years ago → mastectomy
COPD (FEV1/FVC = 55%)
Coronary Artery Disease
Depression
Fibromyalgia
IBS.....

Warfarin
Bisoprolol
Nitrates
Ramipril
Sertraline
Amitriptyline
Mebeverine
Colpermin
Tamoxifen
Spiriva
Seretide
Mrs Williams  56 years old

• Amoxicillin – “SOB and chest pain with wheeze”

• Doxycycline - “red rash all over – hot – felt faint – called 999 and taken to A&E and told drug allergy”

• Clarithromycin – severe vomiting – “wouldn’t give that to my dog”

• Cefalexin “face swollen, couldn’t swallow”
Thank you

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