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Summary

BASELINE ANXIETY SCORES PREDICT ESCALATION TO HIGHER DOSES OF PAROXETINE IN PATIENTS WITH FUNCTIONAL HEARTBURN AND REFLUX HYPERSENSITIVITY

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Baseline anxiety scores predicted paroxetine dose requirements in 57 patients with PPI-refractory functional heartburn or reflux hypersensitivity, with overall symptom response rates of 69% and 53% respectively.

KEY POINTS

- In patients with functional heartburn (42 patients) and reflux hypersensitivity (15 patients) diagnosed by pH-impedance monitoring, paroxetine at 10mg or 20mg daily achieved heartburn relief greater than 60% in 69% and 53% of patients respectively.
- Functional heartburn patients had higher baseline anxiety scores (median HADS 16 vs 11, $p<0.001$) and more frequently required 20mg paroxetine (88% vs 20%), while reflux hypersensitivity patients more often responded to 10mg.
- Baseline anxiety scores predicted the paroxetine dose required for symptom control with an area under the ROC curve of 0.84 (CI 0.71-0.96).
- Anxiety scores decreased from baseline to 8 weeks in both groups: functional heartburn from median 16 to 9, and reflux hypersensitivity from median 11 to 6.
- This study may be relevant to gastroenterologists managing patients with PPI-refractory heartburn and negative endoscopy who are considering SSRI therapy.

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