

Choosing the right drug

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Presentation

Colorectal

Primary Care

Surgery

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The speaker reviewed evidence suggesting that several medications used for chronic constipation may be effective in patients with functional defecatory disorder, challenging the view that only non-pharmacological approaches are appropriate.

KEY POINTS

- Pivotal trials for PEG, bisacodyl, picosulfate, and prucalopride did not exclude patients with defecatory disorder, and the speaker reported that prucalopride showed improvement in symptoms including incomplete bowel movement, straining, and hard stools.
- The speaker stated that a study over 20 years ago found bisacodyl suppository increased rectal tone and was effective in patients with obstructed defecation but not in those with delayed transit.
- In the speaker's unpublished study in healthy subjects, prucalopride was the only agent that reduced rectal compliance and sensitized the rectum compared to picosulfate and placebo.
- Linaclotide trials showed similar results regardless of whether patients with pelvic floor dysfunction were excluded, suggesting the speaker believes it may work in patients with and without defecatory disorder.
- The speaker recommended considering amitriptyline for patients with rectal hypersensitivity, citing a study showing it reduced rectal pain activation in the brain.

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