Sample Clinical Trials Study

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The Effects of a New Drug for the Treatment of Autism ← *title of article*

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Abstract

A new drug for treating autism was tested in a double-blind controlled design with a group of children with autism. Although more children in the experimental group demonstrated improvement in their symptoms than the children taking a placebo, the differences were not significant. Future research is needed to further investigate the effects of this drug.

Introduction

Many psychotropic drugs have been tested for their efficacy in treating the symptoms of autism (e.g., Tucker, Jones, & Martin, 2019; Vanelli, 2018). However, to date, none has proven to be effective for the majority of children with autism. The purpose of the present study was to test the efficacy of a new drug for treating the symptoms of autism. [*It was predicted that, compared with children who received a placebo, children who received the new drug would demonstrate significant improvements in their symptoms of autism.*]

Specific hypothesis

Method

Subjects

The subjects were 24 children with autism between the ages of 5 and 8 years old. There were 21 boys and 3 girls of mixed racial background.

Procedure

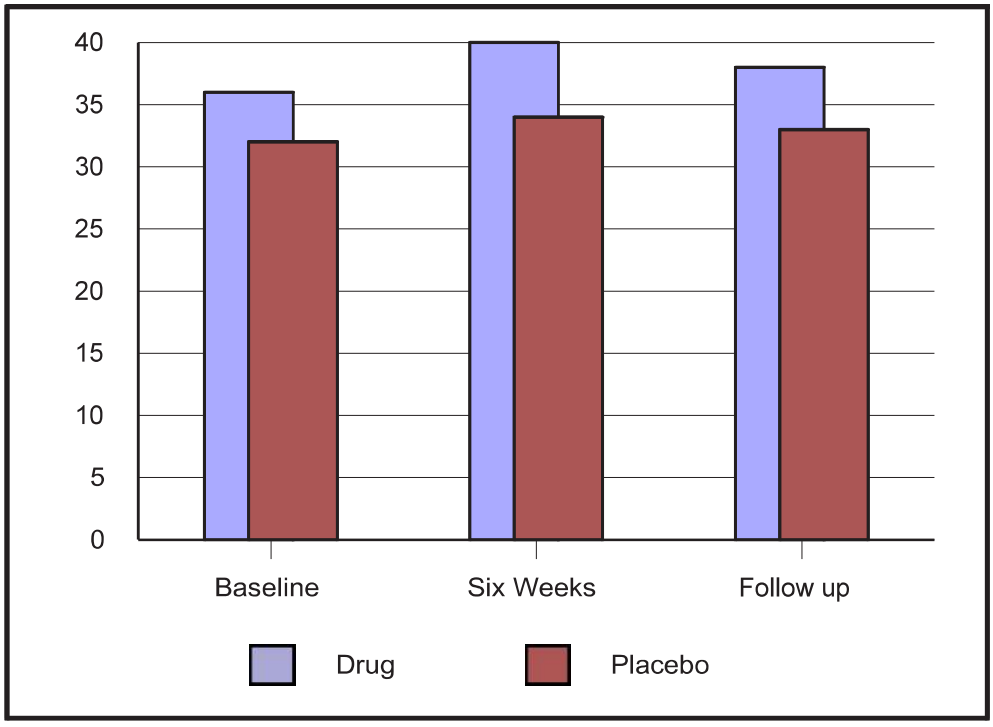
Children were randomly assigned to receive the new drug or a placebo over a six-week trial. Twelve children were randomly assigned to receive the drug and 12 children were randomly assigned to receive a placebo. This study used a double-blind controlled research design; experimenters were informed about the children's group assignments upon completion of the study. Psychologists assessed autism symptomology at baseline (prior to the children receiving the drug), after six weeks of treatment, and at a one-month followup assessment.

Results

Statistically significant findings

Repeated-measures ANOVAs revealed no significant between-group difference at any of the times of assessment: pretest ($F = 2.78$, $p > .05$); six weeks ($F = 3.23$, $p > .05$); and followup ($F = 3.56$, $p > .05$). Figure 1 presents the mean scores for each of the three time periods.

Figure 1. Mean improvement scores for drug and placebo groups.



Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to test the efficacy of a new drug for the treatment of autism. It was predicted that, compared with the control group, children who received the drug would demonstrate a significant improvement in their symptoms of autism. Results of the study failed to find support for the efficacy of the drug. Children who received the drug did not differ significantly from children who received a placebo.

References ← List of relevant studies referenced in the article

Tucker, S., Jones, J., & Martin, M. (2019). The effects of a new drug in the treatment of autism.
Biomedical Research, 6(1), 23–27.

Vanelli, J. F. (2018). Treating autism: A new era in psychotropic treatment of autism. *Journal of Psychotropic Drugs, 24*(7),1145–1149.