

Medical Research Agency

<https://abm.gov.pl/en/news/58,We039II-know-the-results-of-the-amantadine-study-in-a-few-weeks.html>
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We'll know the results of the amantadine study in a few weeks

The Agency for Medical Research, in response to a request from Minister of Health Adam Niedzielski, funded a study on the use of amantadine in preventing progression and treating symptoms of COVID-19. The study aims to confirm whether the incoming reports of the efficacy of a substance previously used to treat Parkinson's also prevents the development of COVID-19.

The very idea of the amantadine study originated from a centre in Lublin, which applied to the Medical Research Agency in the first phase of the pandemic. At the time, there was no indication that it had been taken. Amantadine, which was widely used from 1996 to 2009 for the prevention and treatment of viral influenza A, is now used only as a neurological drug and given to patients with Parkinson's disease or multiple sclerosis.

A spring 2020 study showed that none of the patients taking amantadine for the above indications who were found to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 developed severe symptoms of the disease. Similar observations in patients with Parkinson's disease have also been made by a group from Cambridge University, who advocate the need for more clinical research in this area.

- As a Medical Research Agency we should provide the Polish people with objective knowledge in order to end the discussion on the validity of amantadine use in COVID-19 based on hard scientific evidence. This is what Minister Niedzielski asked us to do. The study we are launching in a few weeks will give us an answer as to whether amantadine actually works. summarizes the President of the Medical Research Agency Radosław Sierpiński, MD, PhD.

As the project leader - prof. Konrad Rejdak (Head of the Department of Neurology; Medical University of Lublin) - by analyzing the mechanism of action of the drug we think that amantadine may be effective in preventing the development of COVID-19 towards acute respiratory failure also by acting on the central nervous system. However, a prerequisite for the efficacy of amantadine in COVID-19 is the use of this drug at an early stage of the disease process, i. e. before developing acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS).

Demonstrating the efficacy and safety of amantadine treatment in improving clinical status in patients diagnosed with COVID-19 is potentially of great importance in combating the effects of the pandemic. If it turns out that the drug does not significantly affect the course and severity of the acute phase of infection, it will still have an important impact on the severity and course of neurological complications, which are very common and persist long after the infection.

