Treatment of acute diarrhoea in adults with dioctahedral smectite (Smecta): a prospective randomised study

使用雙八面體蒙脫石（思密達）治療成人急性腹瀉病者的一個前瞻性隨機化研究

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Background: Acute diarrhoea is a common presenting problem to the accident and emergency department. This study aimed to assess the efficacy of dioctahedral smectite (Smecta) in altering the duration and frequency of acute diarrhoea in the adult population in Hong Kong. Material and methods: This was a prospective, randomised controlled study carried out in the Accident and Emergency Department of Caritas Medical Centre from July 2005 to October 2005. One hundred and ninety eligible adult patients with acute diarrhoea lasting not more than 14 days were randomly assigned either (1) oral rehydration solution (ORS) one sachet three times daily and Smecta one sachet three times daily for two days; or (2) ORS one sachet three times daily for two days. The duration of diarrhoea, daily frequency of diarrhoea, presence of vomiting and fever following treatment were obtained by telephone interview and mailed questionnaires. Results: For patients treated with or without Smecta, there was no statistically significant difference in the mean duration and daily frequency of diarrhoea in the first three days. Conclusion: The use of Smecta did not change the duration or frequency of acute diarrhoea in the adults in this study. (Hong Kong j.emerg.med. 2006;13:84-89)

Keywords: Acute disease, adult, anti-diarrhoeals, diarrhoea

Introduction

Acute diarrhoea is a common problem presenting to medical care. Globally, diarrhoea accounts for more than two million deaths annually.¹ In developed cities like Hong Kong, acute diarrhoea costs inconvenience and productivity loss. According to the data from the Department of Health of Hong Kong, the monthly consultation rates of acute diarrhoeal diseases at general outpatient and private clinics range from 4.1 to 35.3 per 1,000 consultations.²

Acute diarrhoea is defined as increase in fluidity or frequency of stool lasting not more than 14 days in duration.³ The mainstay of treatment is fluid therapy