

Topiramate in the Treatment of Pathological Gambling: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Flexible-Dose Study

In this study, we are testing the safety and efficacy of Topiramate in the treatment of pathological gambling, a disorder of impulse control. Topiramate has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of epilepsy and migraine, but has not been approved for pathological gambling.

Following an initial screening period, patients eligible to participate in this double-blind study are randomly assigned (like a flip of a coin) to receive treatment for pathological gambling with either Topiramate or placebo (an inactive substance that provides no medical treatment) for 14 weeks. At the end of 14 weeks, patients will have a one week 'taper period', during which the medication will be decreased. There will be a maximum of 12 visits during this time. Each visit should last about an hour, except for the pre-study and final visits, which will last approximately 4 hours. 5 blood samples (approximately 2 tbsps), taken throughout the study at a local lab, are required.

To be eligible for the study, subjects must be between the ages of 18 and 70, willing to be interviewed in our clinic a minimum of 11 times over 16 weeks, and meet criteria for pathological gambling, a preoccupation with gambling and an inability to control the urge to gamble that is experienced as distressing, and has significant negative consequences on subject's social, occupational or financial well-being.

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