'DORIDEN'

(An Ideal Sleep Inducer)

by

S. C. Bose, B.Sc., M.B., F.R.C.S. (Edin.), F.R.C.O.G. (Lon.).

Doriden (Ciba) is one amongst the recent drugs introduced in the realm of hypnotics claiming the nearest approach to an ideal sleep inducer. Chemically it is an α - ethyl α- phenyl glutarimide, white crystalline powder with a molecular weight of 217.3. Pharmacologically, it is a quick acting hypnotic of medium duration and is relatively non-toxic and non-habit forming in comparison with other hypnotics commonly used. The soporific effect, produced by the drug, resembles physiological sleep in its depth and nature; it is refreshing and leaves behind no 'hangover' effect. The drug has got no depressant action on the cardiovascular or respiratory centre either, and is well tolerated by patients both old and young.

The drug was given a fair trial in our hospital on the obstetric patients where insomnia remains a problem commonly confronted with at different times.

Material

218 cases were selected at random from the In-patients department of Eden Hospital, Medical College, Calcutta, to note the effect of the drug.

The distribution of the cases were as follows:

(i)	Antepartum	71
(ii)	Intrapartum	32
(iii)	Postpartum	115

The groups mentioned consisted of patients of different ages, parities and general condition so that the study could evaluate the action of the drug more critically.

Method

The usual dosage of the drug used was 250 mg. tabs. orally at bed time but in 24 cases the dosage was found insufficient and was increased to 500 mg. to get a satisfactory result.

(i) *Antepartum Group.* 71 cases (including 10 cases of mild toxaemia where the drug was used at least for 15 days at a stretch). The indication for using hypnotics in this group was only to get rid of insomnia due to fear-tension-complex developed in less educated patients, in an unacquainted surrounding, brooding over the troubles of imminent child-birth all the time.

Sedatives being an imperative item in the therapy of toxaemia of pregnancy, ten such mild cases had a prolonged course of treatment with the drug along with the usual general measures that are taken for these patients.

(ii) *Intrapartum Cases.* 32 cases. In this group the patients had the usual dosage just at the onset of labour. The drug was repeated after 6 hours if required. Progress of the

labour, maternal and foetal effects were noted in all the cases.

(iii) *Postpartum Cases.* 115 cases (including 18 forceps delivery). Disturbance in sleep was found to be a common complaint in this group. Factors as mentioned in group (i) along with the after-pains would often cause a disturbance in the normal sleep of the mother. Antispasmodics and analgesics were used in these mothers till afternoon. At night these drugs were omitted deliberately to note the efficacy of the drug under trial. Suitable sedatives, however, had to be supplemented when this drug failed.

The effect of the drug was compared to that of phenobarbitone which is used extensively in this hospital. Analysis and comments on the results:

	Gr. (i).	Gr. (ii).	Gr. (iii)
No. of patients ..	71	32	115
Satisfactory ..	67	14	106
Unsatisfactory ..	4	18	9

The patients who had a satisfactory effect fell asleep within half an hour and had a subjective sensation of a peaceful refreshing sleep. The failure of the drug in group (ii) was due to its poor analgesic effect which could not overcome the painful sensations of the labour. In 4 cases of group (ii) the nature of the pains (which were previously sluggish and irregular) improved after a good sleep.

Total percentage of failure amounted to 14.2% of all the cases but exclusion of group (ii), where the failures were maximum in the smallest number of patients, improves the figures to 6.9% only.

Toxaemic patients in group (i) usually required no other sedative for sleep, only 2 of them had an increased dosage of 500 mg. before retiring. Postoperative cases of group (iii) had a good sleep with the drug from third night onwards.

The average duration varied between 6-8 hours and the maximum noted was 14 hours. In 31 patients the duration was less than 2 hours and the results were considered unsatisfactory.

After-effects

Nausea and giddiness was complained of by 15 (6.8%) patients in the series. The complaint was quickly relieved after the drug had been withdrawn. Jaundice or rashes were not observed in any of our patients. No deleterious effect was noticed on the babies born of the mothers belonging to groups (i) and (ii). None of the patients became a drug addict even after prolonged use.

No significant changes were noticed in the blood and urine of the patients receiving the drug.

Summary and Conclusion

(1) Doriden, a new non-habitual hypnotic, has been used with encouraging results in 238 obstetric patients.
(2) The drug has got negligible side effects on the mother and baby.
(3) The drug is a well balanced hypnotic for the pre- and post-natal cases.

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