

"I Tried to Get a Bug Out of My Ear": a Case Report of a Patient with Delusions of Parasitic Infestation and the Review of Relevant Literature

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INTRODUCTION:

Primary or secondary delusional parasitosis is a phenomenon that often has a clear and memorable presentation. Stimulants and cocaine in particular, have a long history of producing psychotic episodes. A famous example of these is the 'cocaine bugs'. It has been noted that this is part-delusion and part-hallucination. There have been reports of delusions of parasitic infestation occurring in psychotic disorders as well. We are reporting a case of one patient with delusions of parasitic infestation who self inflicted a trauma to his ear by attempting to remove "a bug".

OBJECTIVES:

1. Obtain a thorough substance, psychiatric and medical history.
2. A close collaboration between dermatologist, medical team and psychiatrist involved in the case is recommended.
3. Antipsychotic and substance use treatment when stimulant use disorder is identified is identified.

AIMS:

1. Identify the etiology of delusional parasitosis.
2. Prompt diagnosis.
3. Implement adequate treatment.

METHODS:

We are reporting a case of a patient with delusions of parasitic infestation and the review of relevant literature.

RESULTS:

On admission patient's urine drug screen was positive for amphetamines and cocaine. He had a questionable history of Schizoaffective disorder. Parasitic infestation was ruled out by the medical team. Pt achieved symptoms resolution during psychiatric hospitalization and treatment with antipsychotics.

CONCLUSION:

Patients with delusions of parasitic infestation can at times present significant danger to self during the attempts to remove 'a parasite', therefore a prompt diagnosis and adequate treatment are of great value.