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Letter to Editor **Open Access**

BENEFITS VERSUS RISKS OF PROTON PUMP INHIBITORS: ARE WE OPENING THE CAN OF WORMS

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Sir,

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) are one of the most commonly used drugs worldwide They are indicated for treatment of Gastro-esophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), acid peptic disorders, stress ulcers and prophylaxis of NSAID induced ulcers.[1] PPIs are more efficacious than other drugs like histamine -2 receptor blockers for the treatment of these disorders.[1] Though PPIs are highly potent and effective acid suppressors they are often misused and prescribed irrationally.

The incidence of irrational use of PPIs varies from 40-70 % in different studies. [2] In one of our previous studies 58 % of PPIs prescriptions were irrational. [2] These findings become much more significant in the light of recent findings which suggest correlation of long term use of PPIs to myocardial infarction and kidney injury. [3,4] The PPIs may be deemed safe for short term use but chronic use carries risk of hip fractures, infection with *clostridium difficle*, community acquired pneumonia.[2] PPIs exposure in elderly population was also found to be associated with hyperparathyroidism in one recently conducted study.[5] The ongoing long term studies for assessing the safety and association of PPIs with various serious outcomes may open up a new can of worms.

Keeping in mind the benefits as well as risks of proton pump inhibitors, clinicians should judiciously use these drugs in practice. The patients should also be educated regarding the adverse outcomes of PPIs on long term therapy as these drugs are easily available without prescription.

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