

45. PATIENT KNOWLEDGE ON STROKE RISK FACTORS, SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT OPTIONS

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Introduction. Worldwide, stroke is the second leading cause of death and a common cause of disability for adults. Stroke has a physical, psychological and major financial impact on patients, families, the healthcare system and society wholeness. Most (about 75%) cases of stroke occur in people over the age of 65, and about one-third of patients die in the first year of onset. In the Republic of Moldova, the mortality rate from stroke remains one of the highest in Europe. According to the data of the national statistical office, in 2018 there were 7735 new cases of stroke, 5227 patients died as a result of stroke, or 1 in 7 annual deaths are attributed to stroke. In the structure of mortality, cerebrovascular diseases occupy the 3rd place, giving way only ischemic heart disease, and oncological diseases.

Aim of study. The aim of this study was to explore knowledge on stroke risk factors, symptoms and treatment options among acute stroke and transient ischemic attack (TIA) patients without previous cerebrovascular disease.

Methods and materials. This prospective study was performed in two groups of patients: 36 stroke patients and 19 patients in the control group who did not have the disease. Patient characteristics are presented as mean or median values, depending on whether the variables were normally distributed. Statistical analysis was performed using Statwing.

Results. A total of 55 patients were included in the study. Mean age was 60.7 years, and 50.9% were men. The distribution of cerebrovascular disease was: 35 (97.2%) ischemic strokes, 1 (2.8%) intracerebral haemorrhage. All 100% of patients in the study group had at least one modifiable risk factor. Only 14 patients (25.4%) know the notion of stroke and only two patients gave a correct answer when asked to define this disease. When they were asked which organ would be affected in the stroke, only 26 (47.3%) patients answered that this is the brain, the other 29 (52.7%) patients listed other organs such as limbs or mentioned that they do not know. Regarding acute stroke treatment, 37 patients (67.3%) could not name any treatment option, 14 patients (25,4%) named antihypertensive treatment as a treatment option, while 4 patients (7,3%) named anticoagulants/antithrombotic treatment.

Conclusion. In conclusion, this study showed a low level of knowledge of patients about modifiable and unchangeable risk factors, measures of prophylaxis and treatment of stroke. The need for patients to be informed and educated is very high and even vital. An important role is played by the means by which patients are informed and the information disseminated using these channels. It is very important for public campaigns to provide information on risk factors, symptom recognition (FAST) and the importance of time to address medical units.