

Anxiety in epilepsy. Gender differences

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Abstract

Background: The aim of the study was to assess the prevalence of anxiety symptoms in women and men with epilepsy, and to evaluate their relationships with psychological variables: duration of the epilepsy disease, education, marital status, and urban/rural areas.

Method: In this study, 281 patients with epilepsy were evaluated: 157 women and 124 men, aged 18 – 71. Anxiety symptoms were evaluated with Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale. The study took place at the National Center of Epileptology, Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova in 2020 – 2021.

Results: This study has demonstrated that anxiety symptoms are present in 56% of women and 35% of men. Anxiety is highlighted in 40% of women and 31% of men with higher education versus 64% of women and 36% of men with secondary education. Anxiety is present in 44% of single women, 60% – married, 70% – divorced, and 50% – widowed in comparison with men: 28% of single men, 40% – married, 33% – divorced. Anxiety is more evident in urban area – 31% of men versus 53% women in comparison with rural area 38% of men versus 59% women. With the progression of the epilepsy disease, the symptoms of anxiety are more pronounced in both men and women.

Conclusions: These results confirm that anxiety is more common in women especially in those married and divorced; psychological assessment and interventions are recommended to all patients with epilepsy, to reduce anxiety, improve the social competency and the quality of life.

Key words: anxiety, epilepsy, gender differences.

Assessment of risk factors in post-stroke cognitive impairment

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Abstract

Background: Cognitive impairment is a frequent symptom in post-stroke patients, with a prevalence range of 20% to 80%. Our study's aim was to analyze the previously reported risk factors in order to highlight predictors of a poor prognosis in post-stroke cognitive impairment. Articles containing the key words: "cognitive impairment", "stroke", "risk factors" were selected from PubMed databases. The following filters were applied: article type – meta-analysis, review, systematic review; period of time – 5 years; language – English; species – humans; age – 45 – 65+ years. 46 results were identified, but only 20 articles were selected as relevant. Analyzing identified data, we found out that the following risk factors had a strong association with cognitive impairment after stroke – in 60 – 80% of cases: increased age, low educational status, vascular comorbidities, prior transient ischemic attack or recurrent stroke, depressive illness, cerebral atrophy, white matter lesions, alcohol use. Also, we identified other risk factors with a low association – in 20 – 30% of cases with cognitive impairment after stroke: family history, genetic variants, carotid plaques, smoking, paresis, elevated homocysteine, low-density lipoprotein, uric acid, low triiodothyronine syndrome, anemia, decreasing serum retinoic acid level, elevated serum rheumatoid factor and matrix metalloproteinases-9 levels.

Conclusions: This literature review confirms the existence of studies with a high level of evidence on risk factors which trigger cognitive impairment in post-stroke patients. Acknowledgement of these risk factors could improve stroke management and rise these patients' quality of life.

Key words: stroke, cognitive impairment, risk factors.