

Conclusions: There is certainly interplay of organic and non-organic factors in the genesis of non-psychotic disturbances after brain damage. The hereditary, constitutional and psychogenic factors are of great importance in the typological formation of the neurotic syndromes after brain damage.

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Dopamine agonists and pathological gambling in parkinson disease

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Background and aims: There is an increasing awareness that pathological gambling can occur as an adverse effect of some dopamine agonist, specially pramipexole, used in the treatment of Parkinson disease. The aim of this study is: 1) to make a review of the literature concerning to this issue; 2) to describe a case that developed pathological gambling after increasing dopamine agonist dose in clinical practice.

Methods: We systematically searched PubMed database using the following combinations of variables: “compulsive gambling”, “Parkinson disease”, “dopamine agonist” and “gambling”. We also review the clinical record of the patient we identified.

Results: We found 36 articles. 4 of them were excluded because they were not strictly about pathological gambling. They describe an association between treatment with dopamine agonists and reversible impulse control disorders (ICD) such as hypersexuality, addictions, compulsive eating and pathological gambling. Daily doses of dopamine agonists were significantly higher in patients who developed an ICD. Pramipexol was the predominantly reported medication. Our case is about a 46 year old married man with Parkinson disease. After increasing the dose of pramipexole in order to achieve a greater efficacy he gradually developed ICD, pathological gambling type. This led to a change in his antiparkinsonian medication.

Conclusions: As many cases of ICD after using dopamine agonists are being reported in the literature, doctors should aware patients about this potential adverse effect.

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Asian cultural influences on dementia in a developed country: a Singapore perspective

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Background and aims: One of the major challenges in Asia is the impact of diseases in the aging population. Dementia is a common and disabling disorder in the elderly which has gained growing public health relevance. The Asian populations in developing countries have been known to report a lower prevalence of dementia, partially influenced by their cultural background and traditional societal roles for the elderly. We aim to investigate how living in a developed country with a strong Asian cultural background, influence perceptions on dementia.

Methods: We invited in-patients of a tertiary hospital, with no previously diagnosed cognitive impairment, to complete an anonymous, self-filled questionnaire about their perceptions of dementia, societal trends and the current role of elderly in Singapore.

Results: Majority of respondents had strong traditional values and felt a duty of care for elderly within their family. Societal norms still suggests that our elderly would more likely give up position of

authority and property for younger members of the family. Our elderly also became significantly less active in society after retirement.

Conclusion: With the rapid development of our society and trend towards nuclear families, the resultant possibility of higher carer stress and pressure for residential placement facilities are likely to grow.

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peg-interferon alpha and ribavirin (peg-IFNalpha/RBV) therapy may induce working memory disturbances in chronic hepatitis c (CHC) patients

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There was a great improvement in CHC prognosis after the introduction of combination therapy with peg-IFNalpha/RBV. The highest treatment drop-out rate is related to interferon-induced mental health problems including confusional states, depressive episodes and manic conditions. The literature concerning working memory abnormalities observed during peg-IFNalpha/RBV therapy of CHC patients was scarce.

The aim of the study was to describe the probable connection between peg-IFNalpha/RBV treatment and the development of cognitive functions' disturbances in CHC patients.

Forty-seven CHC patients were consecutively enrolled in the study. They were arbitrarily divided into two groups: experimental and control consisting of 26 and 21 participants, respectively. Experimental group patients were given peg-IFNalpha/RBV treatment for 48 weeks in standard doses recommended by manufacturers. Control group patients did not receive the above treatment. Both groups underwent neuropsychological examination at the beginning and after 12 weeks of treatment or observation. Neuropsychological evaluation consisted of Stroop Color Word Test (SCWT) and Trail Marking Test (TMT) - instruments used for the assessment of the higher cognitive functions like working memory.

Cognitive performance measured by means of SCWT and TMT decreased significantly in the experimental group after 12 weeks of combination therapy. No significant deterioration was seen in the control group over the period of observation.

The findings suggest that peg-IFNalpha/RBV therapy of CHC patients is connected with the deterioration in cognitive functioning including working memory. The above changes may be the effect of interferon alpha-induced neurotransmission abnormalities in the limbic system, dorso-lateral prefrontal cortex and anterior cingulate cortex.

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Attention abnormalities in chronic hepatitis c (CHC) patients during peg-interferon alpha and ribavirin (peg-IFNalpha/RBV) therapy may persist after treatment discontinuation

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Persistence of various cognitive abnormalities was observed after peg-IFNalpha/RBV therapy discontinuation. The literature concerning CHC patients was scarce and inconclusive.