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THYROID DYSFUNCTION IN CHRONIC SCHIZOPHRENIA IN ALBANIA

Y. themeli¹, I. Aliko², A. Hashorva³

¹Internal Disease, DC IKEDA, Nursing Faculty, ²Mental Health Care WNBHealth Community Center, ³Neuropsychiatry, UHC Mother Teresa, Tirana, Albania

Background: Thyroid dysfunction is relatively common in patients with schizophrenia. This study seeks to determine the prevalence and pattern of thyroid dysfunction and thyroid antibodies presence in a group of adult psychiatric inpatients with chronic schizophrenia.

Methods: Thyroid function tests and thyroid antibodies measurement were performed on 88 patients hospitalized in Psychiatric Clinic of UHC "Mother Teresa" from december 2006 to december 2007.

55 of them (62,5%) were females and 33 of them (37,5%) males. A median age of 43 years (range 16 to 70 years) and a median duration of hospitalization of 10 years (range 1 to 30 years) was assessed.

Results: TAb were found in 22 patients (25%), of which 18 females and 4 males. 16% of them resulted with positive anticorps for Hashimoto Thyroiditis; 9% for Graves` disease.

According to thyroid function tests: 70% had normal test, 8% had elevated TSH: 3% of them with low thyroid hormones and 5% with normal thyroid hormones. 20% of cases had low TSH: 5 % of them with high level of thyroid hormones, 15% with normal thyroid hormones. Hypothyroidism was more frequent in elderly patients (>60 years old), and in those treated with Risperidone. Most of cases (73%) with thyroid disorders resulted from endemic geographic areas. 37% of them mentioned familial history for thyroid pathology, and 23% for diabetes mellitus type 1.

Conclusion: Thyroid abnormalities are common in patients with chronic schizophrenia. This fact call for caution in the use and interpretation of thyroid function tests in these patients.