

- 3) They have the chance to “talk” with the “significant others” of their life to understand and to reframe their problematic relationships.
- 4) They give to the members of the group a role in their life, so they increase and improve the dynamics of the group.
- 5) They concentrate into their life and they realize it as a “whole”.

P0032

Fetal alcohol syndrome and its neuropsychological consequences

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Background: Children of alcohol addicted mothers often present deficits of memory, attention, hyperactivity, difficulties in understanding abstract terms, low control of impulses.

Aims: The aim was to assess the cognitive dysfunction level, and following that to estimate the optimal adjustment of the school environment for particular patients.

Methods: We recruited to our study patients aged between 9 and 18, being taken care of by a psychiatrist, and, partly, from a group of patients participating in a special adjustment rehabilitation program for children with FAS and FAE. The patients were examined with a computerized tests included in the VTS (Vienna Test System): COGNITRON, CORSI, RT (REACTION TEST) and, additionally SIGNAL and DAUF in patients matching age requirements.

Results: Qualitative and quantitative deficits were found. In most patients the most significant were deficits in COGNITRON and CORSI tests, which presented a highly disturbed resistance to distractors, and deficits in working memory. The less characteristic were deficits in the RT test measuring reaction time to simple and complex stimuli. The most difficult to perform turned out to be SIGNAL and DAUF tests. Most of the patients did not manage to do the whole task because of a too low resistance to distractors.

Conclusions: The results of the studies confirmed the reports of teachers and caregivers about great problems that this group had with concentration, sustained attention, and vigilance. However they did not confirm or sometimes contradicted the reports concerning the problems with memory presented in school conditions, and when learning at home.

P0033

Problems with the evaluation of reaction time data: Developing flexible assessment tools to account for time-series effects

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Background and Aims: Computerised measurement of reaction times is state of the art in many fields of research and clinical examinations. Usually, these examinations employ only measures of central tendency (median, mean), deviation (standard deviation) and correct reactions (false reactions). The time course (i.e., sequence) of the individual reaction times has hardly been considered so far.

Methods: Using an assessment software recently developed for scientific purposes (Procalysis®) the attentional performances of multiple drug users are assessed in the context of time series analyses

regarding specific effects of comorbidity (e.g. schizophrenia) or the respective drug use profile.

Results: In addition to the main affects of multiple drug abuse, comorbid schizophrenia is another significant cause of fluctuating reaction times. Besides generally reduced mean reaction times, the time course analyses also indicate comorbidity-dependent specific stage characteristics, which in turn are related to task complexity.

Conclusion: Both in research and the clinic, time series analysis of reaction times should be considered. They can help reveal stage characteristics over time, which can give the clearest indication yet of the extent of subtle brain dysfunctions. This also applies to the ecological validity of single case assessments, such as for determining the ability to drive or operate machinery.

P0034

Neurocognitive function deficits and drug abuse: Specific forms of intoxication

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Background and Aims: So far, research on the long-term effects of chronic multiple drug abuse regarding specific neurocognitive function deficits has been only tentative. However, also regarding rehabilitation of mostly young long-time addicts, studies are urgently needed (e.g., ability to drive or operate machinery) which are directed at the typical abuse clusters (e.g., alcohol and cannabis) of subgroups in a heterogeneous cohort of drug users.

Methods: A group of 750 drug users was examined and the cognitive function deficits in various attentiveness systems compared against the retrospectively detected drug use pattern. Type, extent and stability of drug use were followed back for 10 years.

Results: The study subjects used drugs of different effects: While morphine was hardly associated with serious cognitive function deficits, with cannabis both the cumulative lifetime dosage and the duration of use correlated with subtle disorders of multimodal stimulus processing and control of eye movement. Cumulative use of alcohol also had a negative effect on the cognitive functions, particularly working memory and the frontal executive functions. The effect of amphetamines, methamphetamines and cocaine varied depending on which other drugs were used. Comorbidity (e.g., schizophrenia) also was important.

Conclusions: These neurocognitive function disorders can lead to impairment of cognitive functions which may be needed professionally. The implications of these results for diagnosis and therapy of comorbid multiple drug users are discussed by means of cases typically seen in rehabilitation centers.

P0035

Clinical-morphological signs of chronic Opioid intoxication

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Considerable number of latent drug users is testified by increase of lethal outcomes because of drug overdosing. We have analyzed lethal outcomes when cause of death was opioid overdosing. We have considered 98 cases among them in 86 cases – men died, in 12 - women. Lethal outcome of drug overdose has occurred at the age of 20,6±1,12 years. Diagnosis of somatic pathology in opioid addicts shows clinical-morphological consistence in chronic hepatitis of viral and toxic etiology (77,5%). Identification

of impairments of cardiovascular and excretory systems does not reveal similar consistence: renal impairments are clinically diagnosed in 7.2% of cases, disorders of cardiovascular system in clinical picture of opioid addiction are found in not more than 10% of patients. As a rule, possibilities of early and quick development of dystrophic (fatty) and sclerotic processes in cardiac muscle and coronary vessels as well as epithelium of canals of kidneys that during a morphological diagnosis are revealed in 41.4% and 53.4% of cases, respectively, are not taken into account. Sclerotic alterations and fatty dystrophy of organs as well as another somatic pathology revealed lifetime and during autopsy testify to early disturbances of metabolic processes in chronic opioid intoxication characterized by progression, formed for short time (3.6 years) and at young age (22.5 ± 3.1 years).

P0036

Life events, social support and alcohol relapse risk

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Introduction: There is an increasing focus on the impact of psychosocial factors and stressors on the course of Alcohol Use Disorders. Exposure to traumatic events is common among individuals with substance use disorders. PTSD symptoms were associated with greater risk of relapse in intrapersonal and negative physiological contexts. Causative chains are multifactorial and complex, and genetic factors can influence life event exposure. The purpose of this study is to describe the relationships stressful life events and alcohol relapse in a clinical sample of Alcohol Dependent Subjects.

Methods: Seventy detoxified alcoholics meeting clinical criteria for Alcohol Dependence were consecutively recruited, after a short detoxification period, and then regularly followed for a period of one year. In the occurrence of alcohol relapse, patients were evaluated by the Paykel Interview for Recent Life Events. All patients were assessed by the Global Assessment of Functioning, the Quality of Life Index, and the Social Adaptation Self-evaluation Scale.

Results: Forty-six subjects were still in treatment at the end of the study period. Stressful life events, did not determine an increased relapse rate and were not associated with alcohol relapse.

Discussion: This study suggests that the role of psychosocial risk factors should be reconsidered toward a better understand of the factors implicated in alcohol relapse. Other aspects, such as the psychological functioning, the family environment, the peer relationships, and biological and genetic characteristics are further aspect to investigate.

P0037

Efficacy and safety of Pregabalin in alcohol dependent subjects: A pilot study

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Introduction: Pregabalin is a new anxiolytic that acts as a presynaptic inhibitor of the release of excessive levels of excitatory neurotransmitters. To the best of our knowledge pregabalin has not been investigated in alcohol dependence, a disorder frequently characterized by high levels of anxiety, panic attacks, and unsteadiness.

Methods: Twenty detoxified alcohol dependent subjects meeting clinical criteria for Alcohol Dependence were consecutively recruited, after a short detoxification period, and then orally treated

with flexible doses of pregabalin (mean dosage = 260.5 mg/day) for 6 months. The level of craving for alcohol was evaluated through a Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) and the Obsessive-Compulsive Drinking Scale (OCDS). Psychiatric symptomatology was evaluated through the Symptom Check List 90 Revised (SCL-90 R). Effectiveness measures included the Clinical Global Impressions scale (CGI) and the Quality of Life Index (QOL).

Results: eleven patients (55%) maintained an alcohol free condition for all the study period. Subjects experienced a reduction of craving in both OCDS ($F=13.2$; $p<.001$) and VAS ($F=11.2$; $p<.001$), a decrease of the SCL-90 subscore of hostility-aggression ($F=8.1$; $p<.05$). At the end of the study improvements were evidenced on both CGI ($p<.001$) and QOL ($p<.001$).

Discussion: the data of this pilot clinical study, suggest a possible role for this drug in the treatment of individuals with alcohol problems. If it could be demonstrated in controlled randomised trials that pregabalin is efficacious in decreasing alcohol use, lessening craving, and attenuating psychopathological symptom severity, we will have gained a powerful agent for the treatment of alcohol dependent subjects.

P0038

Adolescence and behavioural addictions: Results from an Italian sample

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Introduction: Adolescence seems to be a critical period of addiction vulnerability, based on both neurobiological, social, and familiar factors. The earlier onset of behavioural/substance dependence seems to predict greater addiction severity, morbidity, and multiple addictive disorders. The aim of this study was to assess the presence of multiple addictions in an Italian adolescent high-school population.

Methods: Data were collected from a sample of 2907 high school students recruited in the area of Barletta (Puglia) and Latina (Lazio). The sample had an average age of 16.69 ± 1.89 years. Through different multi-item scales we evaluated different behavioural addictions: Pathological Gambling, Internet Addiction, Compulsive Buying, Sexual Addiction, Relationship Addiction, Mobile Phone Addiction, Exercise Addiction, Work Addiction.

Results: the presence of pathological gambling was found in 4.4%, compulsive buying in 8.3%, internet addiction in 1.1%, work addiction in 7.2%, exercise addiction in 6.7% of the subjects. Males showed higher scores ($p<.001$) for pathological gambling, internet and exercise addiction, whereas females showed an higher score ($p<.001$) for mobile phone addiction. A positive correlation ($p<.001$) was found between all the scale employed, apart from the Compulsive Buying Scale, which was negatively correlated ($p<.001$) with the other scales.

Discussion: The high number of subjects reporting a behavioural dependence is an unexpected data, which creates concern, and need an adequate analysis. It should be valued if these typologies of “addiction without the substance” are a temporary phenomenon occurring in adolescents or if they are a stable trait, and a consequent risk factor for a substance misuse.