P02-310 - ALEXITHYMIA PREDICTS TRIGLYCERIDE LEVEL, SYSTOLIC BLOOD PRESSURE, AND DIABETIC STATUS IN METABOLIC SYNDROME

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Objectives: The current study elucidates the relations between alexithymia and several biological components of the Metabolic Syndrome (MS). We hypothesized that various facets of the alexithymia construct are differentially related to single components characterizing the MS.

Methods: Investigated were N = 101 patients with MS. To establish the diagnosis of MS according to IDFC criteria, both laboratory (lipid profile, fasting plasma glucose, type 2 diabetes) and non-laboratory (blood pressure, waist circumference, BMI) tests were included. Alexithymia was measured using the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20).

Results: Based on alexithymia scores, patients were classified as low- (TAS-20 score ≤ 51; N = 31), moderate- (51 < TAS-20 score < 61; N = 33), or high-alexithymic (TAS-20 score ≥ 61; N = 37). The amount of moderate and high alexithymic patients proved highly significant amongst patients with MS with readily established diabetes type 2. The alexithymia score showed overall correlations with diabetes type 2 ($r = 0.380$, $p < 0.001$) and triglyceride levels ($r = 0.214$, $p < 0.016$). Correlations with non-laboratory measures were significant for high blood pressure levels ($r = 0.233$, $p < 0.010$). Linear regression models confirmed the existence of linear causal relationships for the observed correlations.

Conclusions: The present results suggest that the alexithymia trait is related to specific biological marker variables in the metabolic syndrome. Alexithymia may, according to our study, contribute to the aggravation of the MS.

Keywords: Alexithymia, Toronto Alexithymia Scale, Metabolic Syndrome, Diabetes type 2, blood pressure, triglycerides, somatic biomarkers.