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The co-occurrence of bipolar and substance-related disorders

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Background and aims: Studies have consistently indicated a strong association between mood and substance-related disorders, which is even greater for bipolarity. The goal of this study is to verify the validity of this association throughout the bipolar spectrum and if there is a dose-response gradient.

Methods: We performed a systematic review in Medline and Liliacs for articles published since 1980, using the keywords “substance” and “bipolar” associated with “dual diagnosis”, “co-occurrence”, “comorbidity” or “coexistence”. 370 articles were retrieved, of which 8 were selected according to the following inclusion criteria: population studies; approaching specifically this comorbidity; and discriminating different subtypes of affective disorders according to DSM (-III, -III-R or IV) or ICD 10 criteria.

Results: 56.1 to 62.3% of bipolar patients present any addiction lifetime, which corresponds to an OR of 3.6-18.9. The magnitude of this association is greater for BD I in relation to BD II (OR 3.9-18.9 vs. 3.6-9.0). This co-occurrence is significant even for subsyndromic bipolarity (OR 2.5-4.3). More severe bipolarity coexists with more harmful patterns of substance consumption: BP I is more associated with drug dependence (OR 11.1), while BP II presents a greater chance of substance abuse (OR 3.9). Subsyndromic bipolarity is more associated with alcohol dependence (OR 3.2-23.8).

Conclusions: The whole bipolar spectrum poses a significant chance of a comorbid substance disorder in a dose-response gradient: The greater the severity of bipolar disorder, the greater its association with any addiction and with more harmful patterns of substance consumption.

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Selective mutism: The power of words

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Background and aims: Selective mutism is an acquired disorder of interpersonal communication in which the child refuses or withholds the speech in some circumstances while displays normal speech in other situations. It is a relatively rare disorder and it appears to be slightly more common in girls than boys. Different etiological explanations have been hypothesized and we often find comorbidity with other psychiatric pathology. However the most frequent association occurs with social phobia, with values of 90 to 100% of comorbidity being referred in some studies.

Methods and Results: The authors undertook a review on this subject, focusing on different aetiology approaches, including genetics, temperamental, psychological, developmental and social conceptualizations. Issues concerning assessment and treatment were explored as well. They point out the importance of an integrative approach of the several theories described, in order to understand the complexity of the pathology and consequently achieve more accurate treatment strategies.

Conclusions: Although rare, selective mutism deserves particular attention because this condition can have dramatically negative

effects on social and educational functioning in childhood reflecting later in adult life.

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The efficacy and side effect profile of lamotrigine in acute mania: A double-

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Background: Though a number of agents are available to treat acute manic episode but either because of their comparable efficacy to lithium or their dose related side effects, need for better agent is always being felt.

Aim: To study the efficacy and side effect profile of lamotrigine and its double blind comparison with lithium in acute mania.

Method: We recruited 50 patients with diagnosis of manic episode according to DSM-IV and were divided into two groups. One group was given lamotrigine 100mg and another lithium 900mg in a double blind fashion. Patients were assessed subsequently on BPRS, CMRS, UKU side effect scale and CGI till next 28 days.

Result: Subjects in lamotrigine group did not show much improvement at the end of 4th week as compared to lithium group. Side effect profile of both groups were in accordance with reported literature except that 61.9% patients in lamotrigine group showed weight loss. Also rash were found in only 3.5% of the lamotrigine group even with such a rapid escalation of the dose.

Conclusion: We found that lamotrigine is ineffective in case of acute manic episode when compared with lithium.

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The suicidal archetype of bipolar patient: An analysis of 206 hospital admissions.

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Objectives: Evaluate the suicide behaviour of the bipolar patient, to understand how and when this kind of behaviour may occur, what are the risk factors that can increase this occurrence and what are the possible preventive strategies.

Methods: Retrospective study in a sample of 84 patients (42 of female sex and 42 of male sex) chosen aleatorially and admitted in Sobral Cid Hospital with bipolar disorder diagnostic. The work was authorized by the ethics for Health Commission of the Sobral Cid Psychiatry Hospital.

Discussion/Conclusions: In the total of 84 patients with bipolar disorder, there were 206 admissions, 122 of them were readmissions. The mean age was 44.5 ± 14.9 years, half were single/divorced and the majority of patients with bipolar type I diagnosis (81%). In what concern to the total of admissions, 43% patients were in manic phase, 36% in depressive phase, 13% in mix phase, and just 8% in hypomanic phase. There were suicide behaviours in 29%, and suicidal ideation (19%) was the most frequent. Suicide attempts occurred in 10% of admissions. In those admissions with suicidal ideation, the patients were in the majority of times in depressive and mixed phase (85%), as well as those with suicide attempts (95%).

Keywords: Bipolar disorder, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt.