

INCIDENCE OF EPILEPSY IN AUTISTIC CHILDREN

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Aim: Significance of incidence in idiopathic epilepsy in autistic children

Method: In this study were involved 26 children (17 male + 9 female) of age interval 6-14 years old, previously diagnosed with autism, from child and adolescent psychiatrist of University Hospital Center Tirana or Mental Health Community Center, Nr. 1, Tirana. Diagnose of autism was based on DSM IV-r Criteria and all of them had a normal CT scan.

After a clinical interview with their parents, child and adolescent psychiatrist selected only those children that had evidence of clinical symptoms for epilepsy. These children were examined clinically and electro-physiologically from an epileptologist (in UHC Tirana) to identify the type and frequency of epileptic crisis. EEG examination was performed after sedation. Data statistical analysis was performed using Hi-Test.(Exel 2002). Values of $p < 0.05$ are considered significant.

Results: 7 of 26 autistic children were diagnosed as having epilepsy; (26,8%). $p < 0,015$. Only 2 of them had family history of epilepsy (28,5%). Epileptic crisis varied between 4-13 paroxysms per month. EEG identified focal and multi-focal paroxysms with Centro-temporal spikes. From all epileptic children 3 showed juvenile myoclonic epilepsy (42,8%), 3 showed complex partial epilepsy with secondary generalization (42.8%), and one had benign partial epilepsy (14.2%).

Conclusions: It exists a significant relation between Autism and Idiopathic Epilepsy $p < 0,015$. High incidence of epilepsy in Autistic Children is influenced mostly form familial predisposition $p < 0,03$. EEG and detailed clinical interview are two effective tools in early diagnose of epilepsy in Autistic Children. Early treatment with AED-s gives satisfactory results in controlling crisis frequency.