

PARKINSON'S DISEASE AND COMORBIDITY WITH DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY DISORDERS

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Parkinson's disease (PD) is frequently accompanied by symptoms of depression and anxiety. However, the relationship between anxiety and depression has not been rigorously defined in these patients.

Aim: To evaluate the frequency of depression and anxiety disorders in PD patients.

In this study, we included 42 patients with PD in II or III Hoehn and Yahr stages presented in Movement Disorders out-patient service near of Clinic of Neurology in UHC "Mother Theresa" and 21 matched medical controls were evaluated using DSM-IV-R criteria, Beck Depression Inventory and Hamilton Anxiety Scale.

They were diagnosed before for Parkinson's disease from Movement Disorders specialist and were under the medical treatment. The mean age of them was 66,5 years, and no other comorbidity was detected.

Twelve (29%) PD patients but only one medical control had a formal anxiety disorder diagnosis. Of the 12 patients with PD who had an anxiety disorder diagnosis, 11 (92%) had a comorbid depressive disorder diagnosis. Of the 18 patients with a depressive disorder, 12 (67%) also had an anxiety disorder diagnosis. Furthermore, a stepwise regression analysis found that the depression measure explained 44% of the variance in anxiety measures whereas neither the severity of illness variables nor the levodopa dose contributed significantly to the variance.

This study suggests that the excess anxiety found in PD patients is unlikely to be primarily a psychological reaction to the illness or a side effect of levodopa treatment.

Rather, we suggest that anxiety and depression are related manifestations of the underlying neuro-chemical changes of PD itself.