

Assessment of Psychological Well-being Rating and Dynamics of Clinical Symptoms in Mitral Valve Prolapse Patients with Anxiety Disorders Receiving Long-term Integrative Psychotherapy

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Introduction

There are some cases of indications of anxiety disorders (AD) that go with mitral valve prolapse (MVP). There is a reduction in the intensity of clinical symptoms after the courses of psychotherapy and anxiolytic treatment (Scordo, 2007).

Objectives

To assess the psychological well-being rating and dynamics of clinical symptoms in MVP patients with AD receiving long-term integrative psychotherapy.

Methods

32 MVP patients with AD attended integrative psychotherapy (1-2 sessions per week, individual assessments). Among them 56.3% of patients received psychotherapy in addition to Alprazolam medication. Duration of psychotherapy courses ranged from 5 months to 2 years. The psychotherapy program consisted of the elements of CBT, Gestalt therapy, Interpersonal psychotherapy, and Psychodynamic psychotherapy. Psychological and clinical examinations of the patients were made before and after the therapy courses, and in the follow-up study after 2, 5, and 10 years.

Results

78.1% of patients that attended psychotherapy demonstrated valid improvements of psychological well-being rating, the reduction of anxiety level, and the application of more effective coping-strategies. Positive dynamics of development of personality reflection, with improved skills of self-regulation, and growing awareness of actual needs and resources of personality - all this was associated with reduction of MVP clinical symptoms such as frequency and intensity of chest pain, psychogenic gastrointestinal disorders, neurogenic hyperventilation syndrome, and tension-type headache. 75% of interviewed patients were reported by the psychiatrist to be in sustained remission.

Conclusions

MVP patients with AD receiving psychotherapy showed a certain improvement in psychological well-being rating and characteristics of disease pattern.