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STIFF PERSON SYNDROME AND PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

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Stiff person syndrome is a rare neurological disorder associated with episodic muscle spasms, which could result in falling down and restriction of movements. They are especially sensitive to sudden sounds, stimulation, stressful events, which all of them result in muscle spasm.

We described a 40 year old educated man who was diagnosed as stiff person syndrome since 3 years ago when he had fallen down during an important meeting. He receives IVIG and 60 mg diazepam as a treatment regimen. He referred to psychiatric clinic due to his nocturnal panic episodes.

Regarding the case we want to investigate psychological problems in this rare syndrome.

Rarity of disease makes discussion and researches difficult, its prevalence is one individual among one million, so the analysis of patients' history may be the best way of study.

Phobias may be the most important disorders in these patients, as any noxious stimuli could provoke severe spasms, so patient may consciously or automatically avoid specific situations such as steps, street, toilet etc.

Avoidance could make patient phobic of being alone and being dependent on others.

Patient may also experience degree of frustration and then often aggression toward others especially relatives. Depression, anxiety and panic are other problems that could be raised. The patient may think, they do not understand the situation.

Rare syndromes potentially are accompanied by a variety of psychological problems which should be tried to be understood and solved.