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EPIDEMIOLOGY OF DEPRESSION AND DISTRESS IN PATIENTS WITH INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE (IBD) AND VALIDATION OF AN INDICATOR SCALE OF PERCEIVED STRESS FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPAIRMENTS

J. Hardt^{1,2}, S. Conrad^{1,3}, C. Muche-Borowski^{1,4}, H. Raspe^{1,5}

¹Institute of Social Medicine, University of Luebeck, University Medical Centre, Lübeck, ²Section of Occupational Health Research, Institute for Safety Engineering (IST), FB D, University of Wuppertal (BUW), Wuppertal, ³Evidence-based Medicine and Guidelines, Agency for Quality in Medicine (AQuMed/ÄZQ), Berlin, ⁴Association of the Scientific Medical Societies in Germany (AWMF), Düsseldorf and Berlin, ⁵Population-based Medicine, University of Luebeck, University Medical Centre, Lübeck, Germany

Background: Previous studies showed associations of stress and episodes of active disease [1,2]. We reported survey data on psychosocial problems of IBD patients[3]. This study investigates associations of stress with health impairments and analyses a scale of perceived stress as an indicator for psychosocial impairments (construct/criterion validity)[4].

Methods: In a multiregional German survey in 2005, 1083 patients with Crohn's disease (CD) and ulcerative colitis were recruited (gastroenterological practices, university outpatient clinics, patient organization). The questionnaire incorporated WHO's ICF[5] and established items and scales (i.a. HADS[6]). Scale construction followed item response theory analysing psychometric properties.

Results: Of the survey responders (58% CD, 65% female, mean age 42yrs), 1/3 reported severe fatigue. Clinically relevant anxiety was observed in 24%, depression in 29% of men and 21% of women. With three items we constructed a scale with good psychometric properties. Three groups (low, moderate, high perceived stress) were identified, differing substantially in reported anxiety/depression and the GIBDI disease activity score.

Conclusions: IBD patients report multiple psychosocial impairments. The scale of perceived stress may identify IBD patients with high demand for psychosocial attendance, if confirmed in independent samples. For enhanced secondary prevention [7] we propose integration of this psychosocial indicator into the diagnostic process.

References

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