

P01-146

THE HAMILTON ANXIETY SCALE IN PATIENTS WITH GRAVES BASEDOW DISEASE

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Background and aims: Graves' disease is an autoimmune disease characterized by goitre with hyperthyroidism, Graves ophthalmopathy and pretibial myxedema. The patients with Graves' disease frequently develop psychiatric manifestations such as mood and anxiety disorders and, cognitive dysfunction. The aim of the study is to estimate the prevalence of anxiety in patients with Graves' disease.

Materials and methods: 66 patients with Graves' disease (46 women and 20 men) were recruited to this study. The subjects were between 32 and 61 years. The Hamilton Anxiety Scale (HAM-A) is a used interview scale that measures the severity of a patient's anxiety, based on 14 items, including anxious mood, tension, fears, insomnia, somatic complaints and behaviour at the interview. The HAM-A was completed prior and after the treatment. Results were compared with measurements of HAM-A in 24 subjects without Graves' disease.

Results: Mild anxiety was present in 24 patients with Graves' disease (36.66%-16 women and 8 men) moderate anxiety in 13 patients (19.69% - 7 women and 6 men) and severe anxiety in 3 patients (4.54%- 2 women and 1 men) prior to treatment of hyperthyroidism. After treatment of hyperthyroidism 12 patients presented mild anxiety, 6 moderate anxiety and 3 severe anxiety. The prevalence of mild anxiety was present in 2 subjects (8.33%-2 women) without Graves' disease.

Conclusion: A significant proportion of patients with Graves' disease shows an altered mental state after treatment of hyperthyroidism. When psychiatric disorders persist after restoration of euthyroidism specific treatment for the psychiatric symptoms may be needed.