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SPATIO-VISUAL WORKING MEMORY EFFECTIVENESS AND DEPRESSION LEVELS AFTER PHARMACOLOGICAL THERAPY WITH SSRI - PRELIMINARY STUDY

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Introduction: Working memory dysfunctions are observed in patients with recurrent depressive disorders. These deficits exert negative effects not only on psychological test performance levels but also on the capacity of affected patients to cope with everyday life situations, as well as on decreased remission levels.

Aim: The goal of the study was to identify possible associations between spatio-visual working memory, evaluated on admission, with the remission degree, assessed after 8-week pharmacotherapy with SSRI in a group of patients with diagnosed depression.

Methods: 141 subjects were examined (patients with depressive disorders, DD: n = 86, healthy subjects, CG: n = 55). Trail Making Test by Reitan (TMT) was used.

Results: CG obtained higher results vs. DD-I patients (the evaluation started on the therapy onset) in TMT A/time ($p=0.09$), TMT B/time ($p=0.009$). CG demonstrated better results than DD-II patients (following eight weeks of pharmacological treatment) in TMT A ($p=0.11$), TMT B ($p=0.85$). Compared to DD-I group, DD-II group achieved better results in TMT A ($p<0.001$) and TMT B ($p<0.001$). The lowest performance levels in TMT A and TMT B may have been related to the highest depression levels after pharmacological treatment.

Conclusions:

1. Depressive disorders are associated with deteriorated efficiency of visual working memory.
2. Antidepressant treatment resulted in improved of visual working memory.
3. The better performance in TMT on the first day of treatment may have influenced the noted reduction in severity of depressive symptoms after treatment with SSRI.