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THE SEVERITY AND DURATION OF DEPRESSION AND THE ANABOLIC BALANCE

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Objectives: In recent years many investigators have paid attention to anabolic balance in depression. They highlight the importance of the ratio of anabolic and catabolic processes for prognosis of the outcome of depression. Some researchers suppose that cortisol/DHEAS ratio and growth hormone (GH) are important markers of anabolic balance. The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of severity and duration of depression on the anabolic balance in depression

Methods: 79 patients with depressive episode were examined (F 32.0-2), 64 males and 15 females. Depressive symptoms were evaluated by the Hamilton Depression Scale (HDS). Anxiety was evaluated by Hamilton Anxiety Scale. Blood samples were drawn before antidepressant treatment. Serum DHEAS, cortisol and growth hormone levels were measured using ELISA kits.

Results: There was a negative correlation between cortisol level and duration of depression ($r = -0,47$, $p=0,037$). Cortisol/DHEAS ratio in patients with severe depression was significantly lower than in patient with mild depression (287 ± 89 and 374 ± 87 , respectively, $P = 0,002$). Patients with early stage of depression have increased levels of catabolic hormones that have positive correlation with the severity of anxiety. Patients with long duration of depression have decreased levels of both anabolic and catabolic hormones.

Conclusions: Our data demonstrate that depression can cause serious changes in the balance of anabolic and catabolic hormones. We can assume that the long duration of depression can cause exhaustion of HPA-axis.