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What Comes First? the Temporal Comorbidity Between Psychiatric Disorder and Other Biomedical Disorders (e.G., Ulcerative Colitis, Cancer) in a Population.

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Aim: The temporal order of comorbidity between psychiatric disorder and other biomedical disorders (e.g., ulcerative colitis, cancer) was examined.

Materials and Methods: Direct physician billing data for the Calgary, Alberta from 1994-2009 for treatment of any presenting concern resulting in an International Classification of Disease (ICD) diagnosis in the Calgary health zone (n = 763449) were used to identify individuals with ulcerative colitis (UC) or neoplasms. The counts of individuals with and without these disorders were tallied and grouped on the basis of the order of the psychiatric disorder and UC or neoplasm. Odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals were calculated and compared along with the annual and cumulative prevalences within each grouping.

Results: In all age groups, neuroses/depression grouping diagnoses were significantly most likely to arise before UC for males (Odds Ratio 1.87) and females (Odds Ratio 2.24). Among children, psychoses were between 3 and 11 times more likely to arise prior to pediatric neoplasm.

Conclusions: The temporal association between psychiatric disorder and the examined biomedical disorders provides novel insight into the etiology of these disorders and has implications related to their respective treatments.