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THE PREVALENCE OF DEPRESSION IN PATIENTS WITH CUSHING'S SYNDROME

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Background and aims: Cushing's patients demonstrate major depression more than any other medical condition. Major depression is a common, complication of Cushing's syndrome, with no significant differences between pituitary -dependent and -independent forms. The aims of the study is to estimate the prevalence of depression in patients with Cushing's syndrome.

Materials and methods: 23 patients with Cushing's syndrome (14 with pituitary-dependent and 9 with pituitary-independent forms) were recruited for this study. The subjects were between 52 and 67 years. Patients were screened initially with a questionnaire detailing their age, medical history, concomitant medications. The Zung self-rating depression scale was used to assess depressive symptomatology. It contains 20 items: index scores below 50 reflect no depression, 50-59 reflect mild depression, 60-69 reflect marked to moderate depression and scores of ≥ 70 reflect severe to extreme depression. Results were compared with measurements in 21 subjects without Cushing's syndrome.

Results: The prevalence of depression in patients with Cushing's syndrome was 52.17% (12 patients). 2 patients (2 women) present mild depression and 10 patients (9 women and 1 men) present moderate or severe depression. Moderate or severe depression was significantly associated with older age, female sex, relatively more severe clinical condition. The prevalence of depression in 21 subjects without Cushing's syndrome was 4.76% (1 women with mild depression).

Conclusion: This study showed that patients with Cushing's syndrome have a greater a risk of depression than people without Cushing's syndrome. Patients with Cushing's syndrome should be routinely screened and adequately treated for depression.