

Psychoses: – basic (etiology and investigations)

POST-PARTUM DEPRESSION AND EARLY MOTHER-INFANT INTERACTION
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This study assesses the effect of the mother's post-partum depression in the mother-infant dyad.

A sample of 28 dyads (14 with depressive/blue mothers and 14 puerperal women without depression, joined by age, social and educational level and number of children) was selected after a previous study on mothers' depression (3rd day post-partum) among 395 consecutive puerperal women at the Obstetrical Department of the University Hospital/Lisbon. The dyads were assessed between the 5th and the 9th month after delivery at home (only 2% at the hospital).

A global clinic assessment was made and a free face-to-face interaction (10 minutes) in natural ambience has been recorded in video. Interaction codification of the global assessment of mother-infant behaviour was performed by the LIDS (Lisbon Interaction Dyad Scale).

We checked a tendency to a less adequate interaction, mainly in relational affective dimension (expressivity and responsivity in the depressive mothers' dyads).

We question the effect of mothers' depression on the new born's development. We propose some basic principles for an early therapeutic intervention in dyads.

SOME BIOLOGICAL MARKERS IN ENDOGENOUS PSYCHOSES

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The aim of this investigation was to explore biological patterns present in the endogenous psychoses. We compared 42 patients diagnosed as major depression (group A) with 54 schizophrenic patients (group B). The complete clinical and laboratory investigations were performed with special regard to the biochemical analysis of neurotransmitters and its metabolites as well as on psychological tests.

The results have shown that the blood level of serotonin, prolactin, adrenalin, noradrenalin and 24 hours concentration of 5-HIAA are rather low in the group A, especially in those patients with strong suicidal tendencies. Opposite results have been observed in the group B which are similar to the finding observed during the manic phase to bipolar affective disorder.

These results correlate with psychic status measured by Overall's short psychiatric rating scale, Hamilton's depression scale and Beck questionnaire. It is very important for the treatment of these disorders.

AMYGDALA-ANTERIOR HIPPOCAMPUS SHRINKAGE IN SCHIZOPHRENIA: NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL CORRELATES

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Summary:

Recent magnetic resonance (MR) studies reported abnormalities of medial temporal lobe and basal ganglia structures. We used an inversion recovery (IR) MR protocol with the assistance of the Talairach atlas to identify neuroanatomical regions of interest in 40 schizophrenic patients and 20 matched controls. The patient group showed smaller amygdala-hippocampus volume as compared with normal controls this finding was more pronounced for the left side, although no diagnosis by side interaction was present. Third ventricle volume was also enlarged in schizophrenics. A trend toward an overall reduction of basal ganglia (accumbens, striatum, and lenticular nucleus) and limbic structures and toward a VBR increase was also seen. Neuropsychological testing of the schizophrenic patients showed deficit of frontal lobe performances that inversely correlated with putamen-accumbens measurements.

The study confirms previous evidence of mesial temporal lobe shrinkage, more evident on the left side in a group of relapsing non-institutionalized schizophrenics.