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Suicide Attempts in a General Hospital Emergency Room

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INTRODUCTION

Suicidal attempts and suicidal ideation are both frequent causes of psychiatric assessments in an emergency hospital based unit.

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

The aim was to determine socio-demographic variables and psychiatric diagnosis associated with suicide attempts in the population admitted to the Emergency Room of a General Hospital in Spain.

METHODS

We studied the prevalence of suicidal behaviour in patients assessed in the Emergency Room of Elche University Hospital (Alicante, Spain) during a period of a year. We studied different characteristics such as age, sex, association with abuse substance, the prevalence of admission to a psychiatric ward and psychiatric diagnosis associated.

RESULTS

A third of Hospital Psychiatric Emergency assessments were for suicide attempt or suicide ideation. Emergency Psychiatrists assessed 262 patients with suicide attempt, 91 male and 171 female, mean age was 31 years. 7,25% of the parasuicide patients treated in the Emergency Room were hospitalized, 63,15% of them with history of psychotic symptoms. 8,33% consumed alcohol or cocaine before the suicide attempt.

CONCLUSIONS

The parasuicide attempts are more frequent in young women. Suicide attempt is nearly twice more frequent in women than men. The most important variable to decide admission in a psychiatric ward was found to be a previous history of psychosis.