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Anxiety, Depression and Cognition in Patients with Lupus Erythematosus

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Introduction: According to data from the literature, depression and anxiety are frequent complaints among patients with lupus erythematosus. Their etiology may be a direct manifestation of attachment of central nervous system through the process of sickness, as well as secondary reaction to the suffering because of chronic disease. However, on the basis of available data it is difficult to close relationship between their existence, seriousness and cognitive deficits.

Objective: The comparison between cognitive functioning of women being treated for systemic lupus erythematosus and healthy women.

Methods: 20 female patients aged 18-38 with SLE were tested. The Vienna Test System was used to assess cognitive function. All persons were also examined using a scale STAI assessing anxiety as a state and as a feature, and the Beck scale to evaluate the severity of depression. The control group consisted of 20 healthy women.

Results: All patients with systemic lupus erythematosus participating in the study showed abnormalities of short-term memory, attention and reaction time in comparison with healthy members of control group. Positive correlations were also found between the results of cognitive test results and the intensity of depression and anxiety.

Conclusions: Antidepressive and atianxiety treatment should be an important element of the therapy of patients with lupus erythematosus.