

CAN SOMATIZATION BE AN EXPRESSIVE CHANNEL FOR LIVING KIDNEY DONORS? "EGYPTIAN STUDY"

W. El-Bahaey

Psychiatry, Mansoura University, Mansoura, Egypt

Background: Living kidney donors (LKDs) are usually motivated by their willingness to save a near relative's life besides adopting altruistic attitude which reduce their concern about the risks of post-donation morbidity or mortality. They rarely express psychological suffering related to donation, with the possibility that this suffering takes an indirect pathway to be expressed such as via somatic complaints. objectives: To assess the prevalence of unexplained somatic symptoms among LKDs and the factors contributing to its existence.

Subjects and methods: 50 LKDs who were almost related to their recipients. Both physical and psychiatric examination was done for them besides psychometric assessment with Middle Sex Hospital Questionnaire (MSHQ).

Results: 58% of donors (Ds) had somatic complaints, but only 16% had underlying physical causes for it and the other 42% were considered to have unexplained somatic symptoms (USSs). The mean score of Ds on the somatization subscale of MSHQ (7.12 ± 3.67) was significantly higher than their mean score on other subscales. Females had higher score than males, and the current physical status of recipients rather than that of donors was the most influential on the degree of somatization.

Conclusion: USSs are common among LKDs and seem to be a substitution for expressing anxious or depressive feelings. More psychological care -pre- and post-donation- should be afforded to living donors to avoid selection of risky subjects and to minimize the development of post donation conflicts.