

Prevalence of Anxiety Disorders and Comorbid Affective Disorders in the Elderly of Castellana Grotte (Italy).

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Introduction: The prevalence of Anxiety Disorders (ADs) among the elderly (65 plus) varies across studies, because of differences in diagnostic criteria's definition and the heterogeneity of clinical presentation. Furthermore the comorbidity of anxiety with affective disorders is controversial.

Objectives: Estimate the prevalence of ADs in 65 years plus subjects in a random sampling of the general population and provide current estimates of comorbidity with affective disorders.

Methods: The sample was collected in the Great Age study, a population-based study conducted in a random sampling of the elderly residents in Castellana, South-East Italy. It includes 719 participants (56,33% males). Through the SCID-IVTR interview performed by a psychiatrist, ADs diagnosis and classification in subtypes (phobia, generalized anxiety disorder, OCD, panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, adjustment disorder and AD nos) were assessed.

Results: The 30,25% of females and 15,30% of males were positive for any DSM-VI disorder. The ADs prevalence was 10,43% (14,97% of women; 6,91% of men; mean age at interview 72 years). Rates prevalence in 65-74 age stratum was 11,78%; 8,1% in 75-84 and 10,26% in the oldest age. The ADs were classified as phobia (1,49%), GAD (2,22%), OCD (0,28%), panic disorder (0,7%), PTSD (0,55%), adjustment disorder (1,67%) and AD nos (3,75%). 21,33% of the ADs had apparently new-onset (Late OnsetADs). Affective disorders occur in 25,33% of ADs.

Conclusions: The prevalence rates of ADs in late life tend to decline, but remain the most common psychiatric disorders, especially in women. Anxiety co-occurs with affective disorders in similar rate to Late OnsetADs.

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