

P01-189

BIPOLAR DEPRESSION SYMPTOMS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

R.K. Al Jurdi^{1,2}, L. Gyulai³, M. Sajatovic⁴, C.X. Nguyen¹

¹Psychiatry, Michael E De Baakey VA Medical Center, ²Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX, ³Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, ⁴University Hospitals Case Medical Center, Cleveland, OH, USA

Introduction: A paucity of evidence describes the presentation of depression across age groups among patients with bipolar disorder.

Objectives: We explored the symptoms and the severity of acute bipolar depression in a multicenter, naturalistic follow-up study for treating bipolar disorder.

Aims: To investigate whether specific depression symptoms are more frequent and/or severe in the elderly with bipolar disorder compared to a younger cohort.

Methods: The Systematic Treatment Enhancement Program for Bipolar Disorder is a National Institute of Mental Health-funded project to evaluate the longitudinal outcome of patients with bipolar disorder. Patients were categorized with "depression" if they experienced at least two consecutive weeks of five clinically significant depression symptoms (change in sleep or appetite; decreased energy; low mood, guilt or low self-esteem; anhedonia; decreased concentration or increased distractibility; psychomotor agitation or retardation; and presence of suicidal thoughts, intent or plans). Patients were stratified by age, (20-59 and >60), and data of all diagnosed with depression were analyzed. **Results:** Of 3,615 participants with bipolar subtype-I or II, 1,564 were diagnosed with depression. Ninety-eight (6.3%) were at least 60 years of age. The most common symptoms in both groups were anhedonia and decreased energy. Younger adults were more likely to have low self-esteem, distractibility, and psychomotor agitation. Except for decreased sleep in the younger cohort, the severity of symptoms was comparable between groups. The two cohorts had a Clinical Global Impression score of 3.99 ($p=.887$).

0	None or Usual	0
-0.25	Questionable, Slight or Rare symptom (occurred once or twice but not clinically significant)	0.25
-0.5	Mild: Clearly present symptom, but sub-threshold for DSM-IV	0.5
-0.75		0.75
-1.0	Moderate: Clearly present symptom and fulfills DSM-IV criteria	1.0
-1.25		1.25
-1.5	Marked	1.5
-1.75		1.75
-2.0	Severe	2.0

[Step BD- Depression Rating Guidelines]

Age	20-59 (%)	>60 (%)	P-Value
Increased Appetite	295 (19.9)	15(15.3)	.296

Decreased Appetite	443 (29.9)	35 (35.7)	.256
Low Mood	791 (53.3)	48 (49.0)	.406
Increased Sleep	164 (11.1)	9 (10.7)	.738
Decreased Sleep	544 (36.7)	31 (31.6)	.331
Low Self-Esteem	1078 (72.7)	60 (61.2)	.020
Distractibility	679 (45.8)	31 (31.6)	.006
Psychomotor Agitation	329 (22.2)	12 (12.2)	.022
Suicidality	306 (20.6)	18 (18.4)	.698

[STEP-BD Bipolar Depression Symptoms by Age]

	20-59		>60		P-Value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Low Mood	1.17	.30	1.09	.22	.60
Increased Appetite	1.10	.25	1.07	.26	.267
Decreased Appetite	1.11	.27	1.11	.30	.967
Increased Sleep	1.73	.26	1.78	.26	.591
Decreased Sleep	1.21	.35	1.06	.21	.023
Self-Esteem	1.14	.30	1.09	.27	.213
Distractibility	1.09	.24	1.07	.23	.698
Suicidality	1.06	.21	1.00	.215	

[STEP BD Bipolar Depression Symptom Severity]

Conclusions: Presenting symptoms and severity of depression in patients with bipolar disorder are comparable across age groups.