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Erythropoietin – a potential tool in the treatment of depressive disorders?

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Introduction: Depression is one of the leading causes of psychiatric disability across the globe because of its high prevalence and chronic, treatment resistant and recurrent nature. Erythropoietin (EPO), well known for its effects on blood cells, has also a key role in neuroprotection and cognitive function.

Objectives: The authors aim to explore the potential of EPO to treat depressive disorders (DD) and related cognitive dysfunction.

Methods: A literature research was conducted on PubMed starting from the MeSH terms: “Erythropoietin” and “Depressive Disorders”. The results selected for our analysis corresponded to investigations using EPO based on an adult population with DD.

Results: The research provided 14 results, of which 9 met the defined criteria. Different types of studies with variable samples were considered, including randomized clinical trials (RCTs) and a systematic review. Overall, despite records of reduction in depression symptomatology and increased quality of life, evidence does not demonstrate statistically significant reductions in depression severity through the use of EPO in the treatment of DD. However, several RCTs examined its effect on cognitive performance, founding effective improvements in memory, verbal recall and recognition. The underlying potential mechanisms and the current limitations in the use of EPO, and of the available studies are analysed and discussed.

Conclusions: Although EPO does not appear to be effective treating depression, it may play a role in improvement of deficits in memory and executive function. Larger RCTs evaluating its potential use are needed, in order to move towards better clinical practice, quality of life and functional reintegration of these patients.

Disclosure: No significant relationships.

Keywords: Depression; depressive disorders; Erythropoietin; Pharmacology

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Perfectionism in academic settings and relationship to depression and socio-demographic characteristics

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Introduction: Acute measles encephalitis is a pathology of the central nervous system. It is most frequent in children but can also be described in adults. Given the rarity of this pathology, we present the case of this patient.

Objectives: To assess perfectionism and depression and to study the relationship between these two parameters in a population of medical students.

Methods: We conducted a descriptive and analytical cross-

sectional study among students of the Faculty of Medicine of Sfax during the months of June, July, and August 2020. The data were collected through a self-questionnaire disseminated on the social network “Facebook”. This questionnaire included identification of socio-demographic characteristics as well as the personal history of students. Perfectionism was assessed by the Rheume scale and depression by the Beck scale.

Results: A total of 206 students participated in the survey. The mean age was 21.49 ± 1.37 years. The majority of students were female (57.2%) with a sex ratio (F/H) of 1.34. Of the participants, 39.8% were enrolled as undergraduates and 60.19% as graduate students. According to their scores on the Rheume scale, the students were non-perfectionists (NP) in 21.4% of cases; moderately perfectionists (MP) in 70.38% of cases, and highly perfectionists (HP) in 8.25% of cases. Severe depression was objectified in 7.3% of the cases. Students living alone were less perfectionist ($p=0.01$). Perfectionism score was higher in depressed students (35 ± 6.34) versus (31.428 ± 6.37) with a statistically significant correlation ($p \leq 0.001$).

Conclusions: It is true that perfectionism is an essential element for academic success. However, screening and prevention of depression are deemed necessary given its significant association with perfectionism.

Disclosure: No significant relationships.

Keywords: case report; measles encephalitis

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Therapy group following a Ketamine treatment – a case report of a patient with resistant depression

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Introduction: There are some patients that remain resistant to treatment for major depressive disorder - who were treated with two or more different medications, and did not demonstrate any improvement in their mental-state. These patients can be treated with a new treatment – Esketamine. The recommended Esketamine treatment protocol includes 8-treatment sessions, each session lasts about two hours. In our clinic, we added a therapy group after each treatment. The therapy group is led by two co-therapist and lasts 30 minutes. The patients are invited to share their experiences from the session.

Objectives: We will present a case report of a 44 year old man, that suffers from a major-depression for years, with symptoms such as loss of energy, recurrent thoughts of death and a decrease in functioning. He was treated with different medications, but there was no improvement in his mental state.

Methods: For the last six months, he was treated with Esketamine and also participated in the therapy group.

Results: According to content that he raised in the sessions of the therapy group and following conversations with him and with his close environment, we observed a clinical improvement in his condition – a positive mood, a decrease of the thoughts of death, an increase in his function at work and at home.

Conclusions: He reported that the improvement is more significant because of the therapy group – he found a peer group, a place to process his treatment experience and to share his feelings and thoughts. We will present vignettes to demonstrate.

Disclosure: No significant relationships.