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DO SUICIDAL FEMALES HAVE „MALE-TYPE” DEPRESSION?

Z. Rihmer¹, W. Rutz², A. Rihmer¹, X. Gonda¹, R. Webb³, N. Kapur³

¹Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary, ²University of Applied Sciences, Coburg, Germany, ³University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

Recent studies suggest an evidence for a "male depressive syndrome" in patients with major depressive disorder.

Because males are markedly overrepresented among suicide victims and the opposite is true for suicide attempters, we investigated the rate and global severity of Gotland Male Depression as measured by the Gotland Male Depression scale in 86 suicide victims (74 males, 12 females), 86 suicide attempters (21 males, 65 females) with current DSM-IV major depressive episode and in 144 normal controls (116 males, 28 females). The rate of Gotland „Male” Depression (total score of 13 or more) was significantly higher in depressed suicide victims (98%) and in depressed suicide attempters (93%) than in normal controls (2%, $p=0.00001$). Among depressed suicide victims 100% of males and 83% of females have had Gotland „Male” Depression ($p=0.02$) while the same figures among the depressed suicide attempters were 91% and 94%, respectively (not significant). The total Gotland Male Depression scores were significantly higher in depressive suicide victims (22.26) and depressive suicide attempters (23.23) than in normal controls (4.01, $p=0.00001$ and $p=0.0001$, respectively), with significant gender differences only among depressed suicide victims (males: 22.85, females: 18.58, $p=0.009$) and normal controls (males: 4.33, females: 2.71, $p=0.05$).

However, since male and female depressed inpatients do not show clinically significant difference in their mean total scores on Gotland scale symptoms (11.99 vs 12.04, Möller-Leimkühler et al, 2004), it would be premature to conclude from our present findings that compared to nonsuicidal female depressives, suicidal female depressives have male-type depression profile.