

ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION AMONG PATIENTS WITH OBESITY REFERRED FOR BARIATRIC SURGERY

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Introduction: There is a significant prevalence of morbid obesity among the population in the United Arab Emirates (BMI>40kg/m²). This has been accompanied by a growth in bariatric surgery.

Objectives: To study psychiatric co-morbidity in obese patients seeking Bariatric Surgery.

Aims: To identify baseline psychological characteristics such as symptoms of anxiety and depression that may potentially interfere or complicate the surgical procedure.

Methods: Eighty eight consecutive obese patients (F=69, M=19) seeking bariatric surgery were recruited at Tawam Hospital in Al Ain. Behavioral/psychosocial evaluations were conducted to screen for symptoms of anxiety and depression using Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HAD). The impact on the degree of perceived disability was assessed on the four functional dimensions of the Sheehan Disability Scale (SDS).

Statistical methods used Pearson Correlation to study correlation between scales and quantitative variables, while frequencies were determined for categorical variables.

Results: The reported frequency of significant symptoms on the HAD were 26.7% for anxiety and 14.7% for depression. The average mean disability scores on the SDS were 21.3%. The relative frequency of disabilities on each of the 4 dimensions of functioning were 28.7%, 35.0%, 36.3%, 36.3% consecutively.

Higher Depression scores were associated with marked disability on the dimensions of Social life, Family/home responsibilities and Religious duties (0.61, 0.38, 0.29 consecutively). Meantime, anxiety scores were associated with higher disability on social life, family/home responsibilities (0.39 and 0.3) but not on work/school or religious duties.

Conclusion: Anxiety and depressive symptoms are common among bariatric patients with morbid obesity in the UAE.