



POSTER PRESENTATION

Delusion of pregnancy and pseudocyesis

Antónia Fornelos¹, Pedro Macedo¹, and Filipa Veríssimo¹

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Abstract

Introduction: Reports in delusion of pregnancy literature are rare and there are no specific epidemiological data on its prevalence. Although not being nosologically specific, these delusions can occur in several mental disorders. This mental illness has been reported in association with the use of anti-psychotics, emotional conflicts, adverse life experiences and severe depressive symptoms. In what concerns to the differential diagnosis pseudocyesis should not be forgotten. This is understood as a form of hysterical neurosis, resembling in every aspect to a real pregnancy except, obviously, in the presence of the fetus.

Objectives: This research aims to clarify the notions of pseudocyesis and delusion of pregnancy and discuss their clinical implications and therapeutic approaches.

Methods: A literature review of scientific articles was conducted about this issue through the PubMed database.

Results: Despite the lack of specific epidemiological data, it is known that the delusion of pregnancy usually arises in developing countries. It can occur in schizoaffective and schizophrenic psychoses, epilepsy, depression and dementia. The

reported cases in male appears as a percentage equal to or higher than females. The delusion of pregnancy has been reported in association with iatrogenic hyperprolactinemia. The emotional conflicts as the intense desire to become pregnant or fear that to happen, adverse life events and severe depressive/anxiety symptoms may be on its origin. Certain cultural beliefs, a sudden weight increase or social isolation can similarly take the patient to dysfunctional interpretations of body sensations. Delusion of pregnancy and pseudocyesis are related. The first one usually appears as a symptom of a psychotic disorder. However, this can precede the physical symptoms present in pseudocyesis. In the latter condition the woman believed to be pregnant, developing some of signs and symptoms of pregnancy such as abdominal enlargement, amenorrhea, feeling fetal movements, gastrointestinal discomfort and breast and/or genital changes.

Discussion/Conclusion: This study presents a brief survey of the literature on delusion of pregnancy and pseudocyesis. This aims to encourage a holistic and comprehensive approach to these disorders, taking into account the complex nature of pregnancy.

Supplementary material: Complete presentation available at <http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org>

¹Hospital of Trás-Os-Montes and Alto Douro, EPE, Vila Real, Portugal
Correspondence: antonia__6@hotmail.com

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