Major depressive episode, cognition, quality of life, and epilepsy

G. Tedrus¹, L. Fonseca¹, M. Augusto¹, and F. Trindade¹

Background: Major depressive episode in adult patients with epilepsy (PWE) is frequent, but the associated factors remain controversial.

Objective: To study the occurrence of depression in PWE and relate it to their clinical characteristics and quality of life (QoL).

Sample and procedures: The study included 200 consecutive PWE from the neurology outpatient clinic of PUC-Campinas. The association between Neurological Disorders Depression Inventory for Epilepsy (NDDI-E) data and their clinical, cognitive, and QOLIE-31 characteristics was investigated at a significance level of p=0.05.

Results: The sample had the following characteristics: 52.5% females; mean schooling of 5.7 years; mean age of 47.6 (±15.1) years; mean age at first epileptic seizure (ES) of 24.1 (±18) years; and 75 (37.5%) PWE had psychiatric disorders. The mean NDDI-E score was 10.3 (±4.0). NDDI-E was negatively correlated with age (Spearman correlation: -0.204; p=0.004); age at first ES (-0.168; p=0.018), and QOLIE-31 (domain and total scores). High ES frequency was associated with higher NDDI-E score (Kruskal-Wallis; p=0.006). Twenty-six cases had NDDI-E score 15, suggestive of major depressive episode, which was associated with lower performance in semantic verbal fluency and QOLIE-31 scores.

Discussion and Conclusion: Major depressive episode was found in 13% of the cases. Clinical, cognitive, and quality of life aspects were correlated with NDDI-E scores.