

Anxiety and depression among elderly admitted to emergency department of AL Rabta teaching hospital.

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Context: Population worldwide is growing wider and older; the number of people aged 60 or over has doubled from 1980 to 2017 and expected to double again by 2050. Emergency departments (ED) seems to be affected by this fast growth of the population as visit rates is reaching 110000 visit per year in 2017 in AL Rabta ED with 63% of visits aged above 60. It is known that the ED is a stressful and noisy environment that may affect the psyche of elderly people, we aim to evaluate the incidence of depression and anxiety among elderly after the admission into ED and determine the possible medical factors associated with their genesis.

Design: Prospective cohort study.

Participants: We included from April to September 2018,128 patients who were followed up during their admission period and discharged after improvement of their health status.

We included only patients that have not been admitted into other departments.

Methods: Patients aged over 65 years were defined as elderly. We collected sociodemographic information, reason and date of visit, medical history, level of autonomy, results of blood samples and other explorations requested on a case-by-case basis, diagnosis of disease, treatments and duration of the hospitalization. The psychological status was assessed using the hospital anxiety and depression (HAD) scale questionnaire at the end of the follow-up period that we defined as the time of discharge from the ED. The comparison between the two groups was analyzed using the Chi-square test.

Results: Elderly patients accounted for 34.4% of participants, 50% of elderly were female. Anxiety and/or depression was found in 87 patient (68%), 86.4% of elderly had symptoms of anxiety and/or depression compared to 58.3% of those with younger age ($p=0.001$). Anxiety was found in 63,6% of elderly versus 45,2% in younger participants ($p=0,04$) and depression was found in 59,1% of elderly versus 29,8% in younger group ($p=0,001$). After making adjustment for gender, medical history, autonomy, reasons of visit, diagnosis, and duration of hospitalization, the significant association between older age and anxiety and/or depression symptoms remained.

Conclusions: The hospitalization in an emergency department affected the psyche of both groups of age. This impact was significantly more relevant among elderly than in younger group.