
PREVALENCE OF DEPRESSION AMONG PATIENTS WITH A HISTORY OF TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

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Introduction

Depression rates are higher in patients with a history of traumatic brain injury than those in the general population. According to the literature 25% of patients meet the criteria for major depression one month after a traumatic brain injury. Sri Lankan data with regard to this are lacking.

Aim

To determine prevalence of clinically significant depression among patients with a history of traumatic brain injury who attend the neuro-trauma clinic at National Hospital of Sri Lanka.

Methods

A descriptive cross sectional study conducted in neuro-trauma Clinic, National Hospital of Sri Lanka. A Sample of 112 patients who attended the clinic with a history of traumatic brain injury within one year was selected using systematic sampling method. They were interviewed using a self-administered questionnaire to assess presence and degree of depression (Sinhala version of Beck Depression Scale) which was followed by a clinical interview to confirm the results.

Results

Hundred and seven (95.5%) were males. Mean age was 37.1 years (Range 17-74). Leading causes of traumatic brain injury were road traffic accidents (36.6%) and accidental falls (30.4%). Thirty two patients (28.5%) had mild depression; 10.7% (n=12) had moderate depression; 1.8% (n=2) had severe depression. Twenty seven (54%) patients did not have depression.

Conclusions

A significant proportion of patients with a past history of traumatic brain injury had depression. Every patient diagnosed to have a traumatic brain injury should undergo psychiatric evaluation in the course of their treatment and if they have symptoms of depression need to treat it vigorously.