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HYPOCHONDRIASIS IN MEDICAL SCIENCES STUDENTS OF MASHHAD, IRAN

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Aims: Hypochondrias is a psychiatric disorder that is recognized with a strong belief and concerns about having a serious illness. Objectives of this study were determination of the frequency of these symptoms in medical sciences fields' students in their relation with age, gender & educational major and degree.

Method: This study was performed on 500 randomly selected students in Mashhad University of Medical Sciences. Those with a known previous medical or mental disorder or defectiveness were excluded. Assessment was done with the hypochondrias questionnaire that includes 36 items. Data was analyzed with appropriate statistical descriptive and analytic tests such as chi-square, independent t and ANOVA.

Results: In the present study the prevalence of hypochondrias in medical students were %36.8 at the borderline level and 16% as the disorder level. Out of 70 cases with hypochondriac disorder 57 had mild and 13 had moderate symptoms. This disorder was significantly more prevalent in girls than boys ($P=0.000$) and it was not related to marital status ($P=0.318$), However, all the students with moderate disorder were single.

Conclusion: The present study showed the higher prevalence of hypochondrias in Iranian medical sciences fields' students compared to those in other countries. In contrast to other studies, the disorder was more prevalent in women in this research. Hypochondriac symptoms in medical sciences fields' students especially in ones with inaccurate medical information are frequent, in this study also there was a higher prevalence of symptoms in people with bachelor degree than those with other educational levels.