

ASSESSMENT OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY FOLLOWING MYOCARDIAL INFARCTION

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Introduction: Studies indicate that about 20% of patients experience depression after acute Myocardial infarction (MI) and that the presence of depression is associated with increased risk for recurrent hospitalization and death. Anxiety seemed to be an independent risk factor for incident Coronary heart disease (CHD) and cardiac mortality. CHD death rates vary with age, gender and socio-economic status. Heart attack patients feel a wide range of emotions including depression, fear and anger, for about two to six months post-MI.

Objectives: Examine a level of depression and anxiety in patients after acute MI compared to outpatient control group according to age, gender and education.

Methods: Patients (n=60) were assessed on demographic and clinical variables and completed the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI). The State - Trait Anxiety Inventory for Adults (STAI) within the first week of hospital admission for acute MI. The STAI has forty questions with a range of four possible responses to each. Patients with a positive depression score should be interviewed more extensively to confirm or rule out depression.

Results: Significant anxiety and depressive symptoms were present in patients with MI compared to the healthy controls . Significant differences between anxiety and depression were found according to gender and age. According to education there were no substantive differences in either sample.

Conclusion: It appears that anxiety after MI a universal phenomenon. In future trials the cause effect relationships between depression, anxiety and adverse health behaviors in patients with coronary artery disease need to be clarified.