

Research abstract

Anxiety symptoms in diabetic patients: influence on presentation and management

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Diabetic patients referred to the outpatient clinic in Wad Medani Teaching Hospital, in the centre of Sudan, were examined in a case-control study to evaluate the influence of anxiety on the presentation and management of diabetes mellitus. The study involved 35 newly diagnosed diabetic patients, who were subjected to clinical interview and mental state examination, and were then divided into two groups based on the presence or absence of anxiety symptoms. The two groups were then followed to determine:

- the influence of anxiety on the clinical presentation of diabetes;
- the influence of anxiety on the line of management of diabetes.

The two groups were compared with regards to the clinical presentation and the forms of management undertaken to control the diabetic state.

The data was analysed by computer using SPSS software. The Student *t*-test was used to compare results. The level of significance was taken as 0.05.

It was found that diabetic patients with symptoms of anxiety were mostly young adults: middle-aged patients showed a less-

er tendency to anxiety. No sex differences were observed when the two groups were compared, but there was a higher percentage of males in both groups. The symptoms of diabetes in diabetic patients with anxiety were more severe than those of diabetic patients without anxiety. It was also found that 72% of the diabetic patients with anxiety were impotent whereas none of the control group was. This emphasizes the role of psychological factors in the etiology of impotence in diabetic patients. The response to the management plans was clearly more favourable in the absence of anxiety. The presence of anxiety in diabetic patients adversely affected their response to management.

The authors conclude that anxiety accompanying diabetes mellitus adversely affects the clinical picture and response to management of diabetes in diabetic patients with anxiety. Management of the accompanying anxiety should be viewed as an integral part of the management of diabetes. The approach to newly diagnosed diabetic patients should be sympathetic as well as meticulous and should include the active involvement of the patients in the management plans.

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