

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS IN DEPRESSION- ALWAYS A CHALLENGE

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INTRODUCTION:

- Numerous patients are treated for a psychiatric illness before being diagnosed with an organic disorder.
- A major mistake of this approach would be not to consider a possible underlying somatic illness.

OBJECTIVES:

- A case-presentation that describes an unusual clinical picture for an adrenal gland tumor.

METHODS:

- A 37-year-old male, diagnosed with an organic mood disorder (according to ICD-10 and DSM-V) and myocardial infarction in the previous year presented for admission in a psychiatric hospital.
- Depressive symptoms were characterized by: motor restlessness, depressed mood, diminished motivation, fatigue, inappropriate guilt, myalgia, insomnia and suicidal passive thoughts.
- The clinical picture also included a Cushing syndrome, with secondary hyperglycemia, newly diagnosed for which an abdominal CT scan with contrast was made.
- The examination identified a tumor in the left adrenal gland with possible secondary metastases in the liver and lungs and also with an incomplete inferior vena cava thrombosis.

RESULTS:

- At Beck short version the results were 28 (severe depression), and at Hamilton 17 items Scale they were 26.
- Cortisol level was 5 times higher than normal (2443,8 nmol/L) and a treatment resistant hypokalemia (2,86 mmol/L) developed.
- The psychiatric treatment administered consisted in antidepressants (Sertraline 50mg) and benzodiazepines.
- Considering that the clinical picture didn't improve, the patient was transferred to an oncological hospital where he died.
- As a particular aspect, we highlight that the dominant complaints were the mood symptoms that appeared first, without any pain, weight loss or other typical symptoms that are associated with cancer.

CONCLUSIONS:

- Studies show consequences of the hypersecretion of glucocorticoids that lead to malfunctioning of noradrenergic and serotonergic neurotransmission in the brain, changes which are reflected in the major symptoms of depression.
- In the future, clinical research should improve the understanding of interactions between affective disorders and endocrine diseases.