

Poster presentation

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The effect of cortisone on anxiety in patients with bronchial asthma

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Background

Several studies have addressed the relationship of cortisone and levels of anxiety. Studies on the influence of exogenously administered cortisone and levels of anxiety in the Greek population are lacking.

practice appears to be linked to high levels of depression as well as with the necessity of administering cortisone.

Materials and methods

We studied 40 patients with bronchial asthma split in 2 groups: in one therapy included cortisone and in the other not. The two groups did not differ in sex ratio (χ^2 $p > 0.05$), age (t test $p > 0.05$) or duration of disease (t test $p > 0.05$), factors that are implicated in generating anxiety. Anxiety symptoms were assessed with the widely used Spielberger scale (A-trait).

Results

Mean age of the studied subjects was 42.70 years (SD: 13.69) whereas mean duration of disease was 8.98 (SD: 5.98). For men mean anxiety score was 39.78 (SD: 8.86; significantly higher than the corresponding value of 34.54 in the general population; t test $p < 0.05$) whereas for women mean anxiety score was 44.11 (significantly higher than the corresponding value of 37.34 in the general population; t test $p < 0.01$). However, no differences in depressive symptoms were noted between groups (vis-à-vis cortisone therapy) (t test $p > 0.05$). Furthermore no differences were found in the number of subjects that reported elements of anxiety (χ^2 $p > 0.05$).

Discussion

Although bronchial asthma is associated with high levels of anxiety symptoms the therapeutic use of cortisone does not appear to contribute in any way in the modulation of these levels. Nevertheless, it seems necessary to evaluate the relationship between cortisone and anxiety taking into account the factor of disease severity, which in clinical