

Poster presentation

Depression and anxiety in patients with glaucoma: a prospective, case-control study

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Background

Many somatic diseases can cause anxiety and depression. The magnitude of the restriction these disorders impose on everyday life and how fatal they are perceived to be, are associated with anxiety and/ or depression. Glaucoma is a serious ocular disease potentially leading to blindness.

The aim of the study was to determine whether patients with glaucoma have more anxiety and/or depressive symptoms than glaucoma-free patients and those with another chronic disease.

Materials and methods

The study population consisted of three groups: A = 95 patients with open-angle glaucoma, B = 101 patients with coronary heart disease, C = 100 healthy controls. Subjects of the three groups did not differ significantly in age, gender and education. Patients had no history of any clinically relevant psychiatric disease or systematic use of psychotropic drugs. All subjects were assessed using the Hamilton Rating Scale for Anxiety (HAM-A) and the 17-item Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (HAM-D17).

Results

A linear relation was observed between anxiety and depression in groups A and B (Pearson correlation, $R_1 = 0.81$ and $R_2 = 0.78$, respectively). Anxiety and depression levels were significantly higher in A and B group than those in healthy controls ($p < 0.05$). Anxiety and depression scores in patients with glaucoma did not differ significantly from the scores in patients with coronary disease ($p > 0.05$). In glaucoma patients, anxiety and depression levels were not influenced by visual acuity ($p > 0.05$), vis-

ual field severity ($p > 0.05$), and use of topical beta-blockers ($p > 0.05$).

Discussion

Glaucoma is positively associated with anxiety and depression. Patients with glaucoma do not report being more anxious or depressed than individuals with another chronic illness (coronary artery disease).