Psychology, measurements and management of pain

SAT0118 MERALGIA PARASTHETICA IN PREGNANCY

MK Al-Izzi, A Sabri, L Saed. *Medicine-Rheumatology Unit, Baghdad Teaching Hospital, Baghdad, Iraq*

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Background

Objectives To study the association between pregnancy and meralgia paresthetica (mp), the entrapment neuropathy of the lateral femoral cutaneous nerve (LFCN).

Methods Three hundred and forty pregnant women were surveyed by history and clinical examination in 3 major obstetric centres in Baghdad for the presence of underlying mp and compared to a control group of 200 non-pregnant females.

Results Thirteen pregnant women were found to have MP (3.8%) in contrast to only one out of 200 non-pregnant women in the control group (0.5%), which was significant statically ($P = 0.019$).

Most of the cases were in their third trimester (53.8%), then in the second trimester (38.5%), while only 7.7% of cases in the first trimester.

Conclusion MP in pregnancy is not a rare disorder but is often misdiagnosed. The aetiological factors in pregnancy may be mechanical and/or anatomical variations of the LFCN. However, this study disproves neither a hormonal nor a hereditary role in the causation of the disorder.

SAT0119 DENIAL IS A COPING STRATEGY IN EARLY RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

¹GJ Trehame, ¹AC Lyons, ²S Mason, ²GD Kitas. *¹School of Psychology; ²Department of Rheumatology, University of Birmingham and Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, Birmingham, UK*

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Background Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is associated with negative psychological outcomes, including depression. Denial is a coping strategy in stressful situations, with well-documented impact on psychological and physical outcome, but has been little studied in RA.

Objectives To investigate several psychological, social, demographic, and physical factors as predictors of the use denial as a coping strategy in RA.

Methods Patients: 118 hospital outpatients with early RA (4 years; $N = 84$). Denial: Reaction to Impairment and Disability Inventory (RIDI). Other assessments: Age, Sex, VAS for Pain and Fatigue, Arthritis Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES), Patient Knowledge Questionnaire (PKQ), Social Support Survey (SSS), Health Assessment Questionnaire (HAQ). Statistics: Principal component analysis (to examine factor structure of Denial questions); hierarchical multiple regression (to determine predictors of Denial).

Results Three denial factors with eigenvalues >1 were extracted: "Future Denial" (3 items; 33% of variance), "Conditional Improvement" (3 items; 22% of variance), and "Present Denial" (1 item; 16% of variance). The Future Denial subscale had good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.83$ compared to $\alpha = 0.47$ for Conditional Improvement). Early RA and being single were

the only significant predictors of Future Denial. Better functional ability was the only predictor of Present Denial. No factors predicted the use of Conditional Improvement.

Conclusion Aspects of denial, particularly Future Denial, may be utilised in the early stages of RA, mainly by those without a partner to rely upon, as a coping strategy to "buy time" in order to come to terms with actual and potential disease impact. Patients who report better functional ability may also be denying current loss of ability; this raises questions about the beneficial nature of self-deceptive attitudes in RA patients and may be clarified by a longitudinal study. Denial should be taken into account when assessing both physical and psychosocial outcomes in RA.

REFERENCE

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SAT0120 PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT MEDIATES THE RELATIONSHIP OF SOMATIC SYMPTOMS WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL FUNCTION IN RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

¹GJ Trehame, ¹AC Lyons, ²S Mason, ²S Macey, ³GD Kitas. *¹School of Psychology; ²Centre for Psychological Research in the Rheumatic Diseases, University of Coventry, Coventry, UK; ³Department of Rheumatology, University of Birmingham and Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, Birmingham*

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Background Pain and fatigue have been linked to negative mental and physical outcome in Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), but this link may be mediated by psychological processes.

Objectives To examine whether the link of RA symptoms to well-being is mediated by the process of psychological adjustment, defined as Disease Self-Efficacy (belief in certain abilities), Disease Acceptance (the ability to accommodate disease-generated stressors), and General Self-Discrepancy (the distance between the actual and ideal self-concepts).

Methods Patients: 140 random, consenting hospital outpatients with RA. Instruments: (a) Somatic symptoms: Visual Analogue Scales for pain and fatigue; (b) Mental Health: Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HAD); (c) Physical Function: Health Assessment Questionnaire (HAQ); (d) Psychological Adjustment: Arthritis Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES), Acceptance of Illness Scale (AIS), and Self-Discrepancy Scale (SDS). Statistics: correlation, hierarchical multiple regression.

Results Regression strategies to detect mediators indicated that: Disease Acceptance and Self-Efficacy For Other Symptoms mediated the relationship between Fatigue and Depression (beta reducing from 0.28, $p < 0.01$, to 0.02, n.s.); Self-Efficacy for Other Symptoms also mediated the relationship between Pain and Depression (beta reducing from 0.23, $p < 0.05$, to 0.11, n.s.); and Self-Efficacy for Pain mediated the relationship between Pain and Physical Function (beta reducing from 0.21, $p < 0.05$, to 0.08, n.s.).

Conclusion Disease Acceptance and Self-Efficacy as measures of Psychological Adjustment mediate the relationship of somatic symptoms with mental health and physical function in RA. They may be appropriate targets for intervention in patients with RA.