Abstract

Original Article

Exploring Dementia in Primary Health Care: Comorbidities and Diagnostic Tools

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Abstract

Background: Dementia, Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia, are the most frequent cause of chronic cognitive decline. The purpose of the study was to explore the perspectives and the possible causal relationships between medical, environmental and socio-demographic factors and cognitive decline in Greek island population.

Methodology: The study population comprised 100 individuals followed up at the outpatient clinics of Salamina's Heath Center. Patients were tested with the Mini Mental State Examination and the Geriatric Depression Scale.

Results : Arterial hypertension was the most common disorder (71%), followed by dyslipidemia (50%) and diabetes mellitus (43%). The frequency of the coronary disease was 25% The MMSE score was positively associated with educational level and physical activity ($p<0.05$). Patients with the coronary disease had higher score at GDS. A higher score at MMSE correlated with lower score at GDS ($p<0.05$).

Conclusion: The findings of this study confirm the coexistence of cognitive disorders with depression and that both of the them can be investigated early at primary health care level. The frequency of the dementia is underestimated at primary health care.

Key words: Dementia, Primary Health Care, elderly, comorbidity
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