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Title: Psychogenic cough in children: Clinical, laboratory characteristics and follow- up

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Body: Aim – Method: Clinical and laboratory characteristics of 201 children, (51.2% boys), aged 4.5 - 18 years with psychogenic cough were analyzed retrospectively. Children were seen as outpatients, over an eleven year period (2002-2012). Half of the children were re-evaluated 6.95 (± 3.4) years later via a telephone conduct. Results:. Clinical characteristics: mean duration of the cough: 5.26 ± 3.1 months harsh and explosive (75%), croupy and barking (7.96%), exacerbating in the presence of medical staff (62%), disappearing with sleep (98%), not exacerbated with exercise (82%), not accompanied with wheeze (96.5%). Fifty –two percent of children appeared to be under psychological stress. Fifty-five percent of the children had received antitussives, beta-2 agonists, inhaled steroids, anti-leucotrienes, anti-histamines, or oral steroids, with no response. Physical examination and lung function tests were normal (FEV1: $101.9 \pm 13.8\%$ and FVC: $104.3 \pm 15.7\%$). Explanation of the origin of the cough and re-assurance were helpful for 82% of the patients. Ninety-three of the 201 children (46.3%) were evaluated 6.95 (± 3.4) years later. Cough was completely resolved among 86% of them. Fifteen percent of the children, whose cough was resolved, had 1-3 relapses, responding to anti-asthmatic treatment. Conclusions: The recognition of the characteristic pattern of the psychogenic cough in a child of school age with chronic non-specific cough will result in the early diagnosis and treatment, avoiding unnecessary and expensive tests. Re-assurance and explanation of the origin of the cough result in resolution of the cough among the majority of the cases.