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Title: Characteristics and prognostic factors associated with cardiovascular (CV) comorbidity in COPD patients hospitalized for acute exacerbation (AECOPD)

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Body: Background: In a recent publication (Piquet, ERJ, 2013), we found that CV comorbidity (coronary heart disease, chronic heart failure) was an independent risk factor for mortality following hospitalization for AECOPD. Objective: To compare the characteristics and risk factors for 4-year mortality between COPD patients with and without CV comorbidity hospitalized for AECOPD. Methods: Vital status of 1824 patients (female: 23.2%; age: 70.3+/-11.3 yrs) admitted for AECOPD in 2006-2007 was documented in 2010-2011. Results: Vital status was available for 1750 patients: 481 (27.5%) and 1269 (72.5%) with and without CV comorbidity, respectively. Mortality was 57.0% and 40.4% in these patients, respectively. The following significant differences were found between patients with vs without CV comorbidity: increased % of men (84.4% vs 73.9%); older age (74.3+/-9.4 vs 68.5+/-11.5 yrs); higher BMI (26.3+/-5.9 vs 25.3+/-6.0 kg/m²); higher frequency of arrhythmia (6.2% vs 2.5%) and lower limb oedema (18.9% vs 11.1%) on admission. Multivariate analysis found that age (≥ 80 vs < 60 years), hospital admissions for AECOPD within the previous year (2 to ≥ 4 vs 0), lower limb oedema on admission and oxygen-therapy at discharge were independent mortality risk factors in both populations. Lung cancer, neurological impairment and use of accessory inspiratory muscles on admission were independently associated with mortality in patients without CV comorbidity. Conclusion: Despite different mortality rates and characteristics at admission, patients with and without CV comorbidity share largely similar independent risk factors for mortality.