

European Respiratory Society Annual Congress 2013

Abstract Number: 1862

Publication Number: P2386

Abstract Group: 1.6. General Practice and Primary Care

Keyword 1: COPD - diagnosis **Keyword 2:** COPD - exacerbations **Keyword 3:** COPD - management

Title: Cardiovascular diseases (CVD), arterial hypertension (AH) and diabetes mellitus (DM) in a cohort of 609 COPD patients: Associations with the new GOLD classification 2011

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Body: Background: CVD, AH and DM are common comorbidities in COPD. Their association with the new GOLD 2011 classification has not been evaluated. Objective: To evaluate the prevalence of CVD, AH and DM in patients admitted to the hospital for COPD exacerbation (AECOPD). Methods: 609 patients admitted for AECOPD were followed-up monthly for one year. Results: Patients' classification according to GOLD 2011 and the prevalence of CVD, AH and DM are shown in Table 1. Comorbid diseases were more common in more severe COPD. Patients without comorbidities had fewer AECOPD in 1 year compared to patients with 1, 2 and 3 comorbidities (0.4 ± 0.5 , 1.9 ± 2.5 , 3.6 ± 3.3 and 4.6 ± 3.5 respectively, $p < 0.001$) as well as fewer hospitalizations for AECOPD (0.1 ± 0.3 , 0.7 ± 1.6 , 1.6 ± 1.9 and 2.0 ± 2.6 , respectively, $p < 0.001$). Patients in group B with comorbidities had more AECOPD and hospitalizations in 1 year compared to group C ($p < 0.001$). The presence of comorbidities was an independent predictor of AECOPD and hospitalizations in multivariate Cox regression analysis. Conclusions: Cardiovascular comorbidities are common in patients admitted to the hospital with AECOPD and is associated with disease severity. The presence of comorbidities is associated with the number of AECOPD and hospitalizations for AECOPD in the following year.

Table 1

GOLD	N(%)*	CVD(%)#	AH(%)#	DM (%)#
A	142(23.3)	45(31.7)	79(55.6)	14(9.9)

B	59(9.7)	19(32.2)	28(47.5)	21(35.6)
C	134(22.0)	65(48.5)	99(73.9)	31(23.1)
D	274(45.0)	202(73.7)	204(74.5)	129(47.1)
Total	609	331(54.4)	410(67.3)	195(32.0)

* Percentage refers to the total number of patients # Percentage refers to the patients of each category