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Title: Do COPD severity parameters predict mood disorders?

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Body: We evaluated the mood states disorders in COPD patients and their relationship with COPD severity parameters. We studied 60 consecutive stable COPD outpatients (39 M; aged 53-91) and 30 subjects without respiratory disease (control group) (14 M; aged 50-86). All subjects performed a spirometry and a six minutes walking test (6'WT). Dyspnea perception was evaluated by modified Medical Research Council questionnaire (mMRC). Depressive and anxious symptoms were investigated by Beck Depression Inventory-II and Stay Y, respectively. The COPD patients were classified on the basis of guidelines: 30 in group A, 8 in B, 13 in C, and 9 in D. The prevalence of depressive symptoms in COPD patients and in controls was 28% and 23%, respectively (NS). No significant difference was found between groups for depression severity. Among COPD patients, depressive symptoms distribution was: 5 in categorie A, 4 in B, 2 in C and 6 in D (p=.034). A higher prevalence of depressive symptoms and higher severity levels were found in B+D when compared to A+C subjects (p<0.0001). No difference was found between A+B vs C+D subjects. 6'WT and mMRC were inversely related only in COPD patients (p<0.0001). The mMRC was significant different between groups (p=.022). mMRC and depression were directly correlated (p<0.001). No association was found between depression and GOLD stages, exacerbation in the last year. Anxiety prevalence was not different between groups. Anxiety was not associated with mMRC, GOLD stages, exacerbation in the last year. We conclude that, among individual parameters of COPD severity, only mMRC score is a good, strong and direct predictor of depression in COPD patients. Depressive symptoms should be investigated in COPD when mMRC score is high.