

European Respiratory Society Annual Congress 2013

Abstract Number: 5240

Publication Number: P2033

Abstract Group: 4.2. Sleep and Control of Breathing

Keyword 1: Apnoea / Hypopnea **Keyword 2:** Sleep studies **Keyword 3:** Sleep disorders

Title: Validity of Berlin questionnaire for obstructive sleep apnea in a sleep clinic population

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Body: Objective: The Berlin Questionnaire (BQ) and Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS) are two of the widely used screening instruments for subjects suffering from sleep disorders. The objective of the present study was to determine the validity of the BQ and ESS in the patients who were admitted to our sleep clinic, using overnight polysomnography as the “gold standard”. Methods: The BQ and ESS were performed to 1375 patients hospitalized in our Sleep Clinic for polysomnographic evaluation between 2009-2013. Patients' demographics and polysomnography results were evaluated. Sensitivity and specificity of BQ and ESS were determined. Results: One thousand one hundred sixty of the 1375 subjects had apnea-hypopnea index (AHI) > 5 and 71.1% of them were classified as being at high risk of sleep apnea with BQ and 46.6% of them were classified as having high score with ESS. Being in the high-risk group with the self-reported BQ predicted an AHI > 5 with a sensitivity of 0.74 and a specificity of 0.44, versus a sensitivity of 0.48 and a specificity of 0.60 with the self-reported ESS. At a cut-off AHI=15, the BQ had a sensitivity of 0.77 and a specificity of 0.39. AHIs were significantly correlated with the scores in each category and the total scores of BQ (p<0.001). Conclusions: The BQ is a poor predictor of obstructive sleep apnea in patients admitted to our sleep clinic due to the low specificity levels.