

Epidemiology of Anxiety in General Medicine in France Data from the Observatory of General Medicine 1994/1995

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Summary

Amongst the 55495 patients seen by 77 GPs in one year (53,76% females), 1722 suffered from an anxiety syndrome (71% females). The frequency of anxiety syndrome appears significantly during adolescence, is maximal between the ages 40-65 and diminishes slowly. We found the same number of sessions (2,6) by patient for each sex. Anxiety concerns 2,55% of total consultations and visits. It is ranking 14th amongst all the Consultation's Results with a considerable difference between women (10th rank) and men (26th rank). Sex ratio W/M of anxiety syndrome is 2,5, compared with the sex ratio W/M of main "psychic disorders" which vary between 2,84 and 1,83 in our data

Introduction

We aim to study the frequency of the anxiety syndrome amongst the population of patients consulting a network of computerised general practitioners and to compare it to national data in general practice when available

Methodology

The "OBSERVATORY OF GENERAL PRACTICE" of the French Society of General Practitioners is a computerising network of general practitioners established in 1993. For each consultation or home visit, we use a software containing the "Medical Consultation's Results Dictionary" in order to pick up relevant information about each disorder that we take in charge. This dictionary defines the most frequent health problems in general practice with a common language. It contains 269 Consultation's Results with definitions, inclusive and exclusive items. This study is based on the results of 77 GPs from July 1994 to June 1995.

Definition

Anxiety-anguish	
++++	sensation of underlying fear
++	internal tension
++	sensation of impending danger
++	apprehensive expectations
+++	painful somatic manifestation
++	motory
++	respiratory
++	digestive
++	cardiac
++	neurovegetative
+/-	permanent
+/-	paroxystic
+/-	panic state, incoercible, worsening of manifestation
+/-	insomnia

Discussion of representativity

The pyramid of age of the patients seen in the network was the same as in the general population. Female patients were a little over represented (53,76% SFMG 55595 patients vs 51,6% CREDES 1996 9628 patients). The repartition of consultations (81%) and visits (19%) were the same as in national CREDES inquiry (1996). The SFMG network, widespread in the country, had less female GP and more group practice than the GP population in France.

Conclusion

These first results could favor the hypothesis of sexual determinism in the adaptive capacities to stress. They also question the importance of cultural conditionings in the expression of anxiety syndrome by patients or it's detection by practitioners.

Results (1994-1995)

OMG

Results of Consultation	317 080
Sessions	176 123
Patients	55 495 (W = 29 600, M = 25 895)

ANXIETY PATIENTS

Patients suffering from anxiety/sex

	Total	W	M
Number of patient	1722	1217	505
<i>% patient</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>29</i>

ANXIETY SESSIONS

Rank and frequency of "anxiety" sessions /age

Age (years)	Sessions	Rank	Frequency %
0-2	4	-	
2-15	42	-	1
16-39	985	11th	2,06
<i>40-64</i>	<i>1782</i>	<i>9th</i>	<i>4,44</i>
65-79	1273	10th	3,41
Over 80	412	20th	3,12
Total	4498	12th	2,55

Rank and frequency of "anxiety" sessions / sex

	Total	W	M
Sessions	4498	3189	1309
<i>Rank RC</i>	<i>14 th</i>	<i>10 th</i>	<i>24 th</i>
Frequency (%)	2,55	1,81	0,74

COMPARISON with CREDES DATAS

Compared frequencies of "psychic disorders" for 100 sessions Data SFMG (computerized DRC) vs CREDES (Inquiry CIM9)

Problem	SFMG % (95)	CREDES IMS % (94)
Insomnia	4,3	3
Anxiety	2,55	3,3
Depressive mood	2,18	Not define
Depression	1,82	3,8
Asthenia	1,84	2,2
Nervosism	1,21	0,4
Reaction to a stressing situation	1,02	Not define
Other psychic disorders	0,78	2,3
Total	15,70 %	15,00 %

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FREQUENCY OF "PSYCHIC DISORDERS" SESSIONS /SEX

Result of Consultation	Sessions	%Total	% F	%M	Sex ratio F/M
Insomnia	7577	4,30	2,78	1,52	1,83
Anxiety	4498	2,55	1,80	0,75	2,44
Depressive mood	3846	2,18	1,62	0,56	2,88
Depression	3206	1,82	1,32	0,50	2,69
Reaction to a stressing situation	2810	1,59	1,19	0,40	2,94
Nervosism	2148	1,21	0,83	0,38	2,11