

THE OCCURRENCE OF NEUROLOGICAL SYMPTOMS IN CURRENTLY ABSTINENT MISUSERS OF ALCOHOL

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Background: Significant neurological symptoms may be overlooked because of the traditional view that the non-Korsakoff's psychosis, middle aged alcoholic misuser is neurologically preserved.

Aims: In this study, we wanted to investigate the presence of neurological symptoms in individuals with misuse or dependence on alcohol who were abstinent for at least 1 month.

Method: We used two scales from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2) to ascertain the presence of both neurological symptoms (HEA-2) and symptoms of general health concern (HEA-3) in 70 individuals who had a diagnosis of alcohol misuse or dependence, who were abstinent for greater than 1 month.

Results: Individuals reported significantly more neurological symptoms than general health difficulties ($p < 0.001$). We detected neurological symptoms, unlike general health difficulties in individuals who were abstinent from alcohol for 12 months. When we examined diagnostic subgroups, general health difficulties were most present in individuals with anxiety disorders; however, neurological difficulties were present across diagnostic groups.

Conclusion: Neurological symptoms persist to a greater extent than general health concerns in individuals who previously were dependent or misused alcohol.