Depression in Late Life in Urban and Semi Urban Areas of South-west Greece

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Introduction

Depression is the most common mental health problem in late life.

Objectives

To estimate the prevalence of depression in the elderly and to investigate associations with risk factors.

Methods

A cross-sectional study was conducted among the members of four day care centers for older people (KAPI), three in the municipality of Patras, West-Greece and in one KAPI in the municipality of Tripolis, Peloponnese-Greece. A total of 378 individuals took part in the study. A questionnaire was developed to collect basic demographic data. Moreover, to all participants the Greek validated version of the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15) was applied, to screen for depressive symptoms.

Results

According to GDS-15, 48.1% of the studied population screened positive for depressive symptoms (38.6 % moderate, 9.5% severe). In 139 members of KAPI of Tripolis, depressive symptoms were more frequent in women than in men (62.9% vs 45.5%, p=0.012), in not married (85.6% vs 38.9%, p<0.001), in participants without children (91.7% vs 49.2%, p<0.001), in subjects suffering from insomnia (88.6% vs 6.7%. p<0.001), in participants with low monthly income (63.7% vs 25.8%, p<0.001) and in older adults with co-morbidity (62.4% vs 4.5%, p<0.001). In 239 members of KAPI of Patras, depression were more frequent in women (54.6% *vs* 37.4%, p=0.027), in not married (55.6% *vs* 38.9%, p=0.038), in subjects living alone (62% *vs* 38.1%, p=0.003) and in elderly with co-morbidity (50.8% *vs* 27.5%, p=0.02).

Conclusions

The present study reveals high prevalence and several risk factors for developing depression in the specific population of the elderly.