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Dissociative Episodes, Body-art & Suicide Attempts: a Case- Control Study

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INTRODUCTION: 'Body- Art' and dissociative episodes are associated with a higher risk for self harm and suicide attempts (SA) in adolescents. Evidence of these associations in adults are lacking. **OBJECTIVES:** we investigate the association between body-art, SA and dissociative episodes in a sample of adult psychiatric in-patients. **AIMS:** to investigate and further describe the relationship between these issues. **METHODS:** all subjects aged more than 18 hospitalized for a SA in the Psychiatric Clinic of Genova (February 2013- 2014) were recruited. For each of them an age- and sex- matched control hospitalized for reasons other than SA was enrolled. Each of them completed SCID I, II; ISS; DES. A semistructured interview about the body-art, the method used in the SA, the presence of family TS was conducted. **RESULTS:** positive association between body-art, more previous SA and dissociative episodes. 75% of patients with more than one body-art had a diagnosis in both axis and repeated SA. No association between axis II diagnosis and dissociative episodes. Positive association between violent methods in SA and dissociative episodes, but not with body art. **DISCUSSION:** our results support in adults evidence from previous literature concerning adolescents. The results can be understood in the light of recent epigenetic evidence and of the altered pain threshold in suicidal people. **CONCLUSION:** The altered perception of the body mind bond could be an important target for prevention and treatment strategies of suicidal patients. Further studies are needed to better investigate these associations in adult population.