

EVALUATION OF SLEEP AND PAIN IN NEWLY DIAGNOSED PATIENTS WITH GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER (GAD): THE ESPIGA STUDY

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Introduction: In the general population the 12-month prevalence of GAD is estimated to be about 2%. Higher prevalences have been found in primary care settings, with estimates of well over 6%. The role of sleep problems and pain in GAD remains understudied.

Objectives: To evaluate the frequency of sleep problems and pain in newly diagnosed GAD patients in 5 European countries.

Methods: Non-interventional, cross-sectional survey of 1650 adult patients newly diagnosed with GAD in primary care settings. Assessment included clinical interview rating and self report data.

Results: Mean age of the sample was 49.2 years (SD; 14.5). Mean GAD-7 score was 14.8 (SD; 3.1) and the median duration of symptoms was 12.0 months. The proportion with sleep disturbance and pain were 85.9% and 75.9%, respectively. Disturbed sleep had persisted for a median of 9.0 months and was mainly classified as "difficulty in falling asleep" (76.1%) or "nocturnal awakening" (58.8%). The median duration of pain was 6.0 months, and located mainly in the cervical region (47.0%) and upper back/limbs (40.1%). The mean number of days that patients were unable to work because of GAD-related health problems during the preceding 3 month period was 10.8 (95%CI; 9.6-12.0). The proportion of patients that visited the primary care physician and specialist during the preceding 3 months was 93.8% and 40.3%, respectively.

Conclusions: Sleep problems and pain are extremely frequent characteristics of GAD, contributing to the disability and work productivity profile associated with GAD as well as the patients' use of health care resources.