

cal difference between groups concerning the parameters analyzed except that the biopolymer has been slowly absorbed ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: The sugar cane biopolymer membrane can

be used as dural substitute in rats and it evolves to be absorbed by the hostess.

Key words: dura-mater, sugar cane biopolymer, expanded polytetrafluoroethylene.

*Membrana de biopolímero de cana de açúcar como substituto de dura-máter em ratos /wistar (Resumo). Tese de Doutorado, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (Área: Cirurgia clínica e experimental). Orientador: José Lamartine de Andrade Aguiar.

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CLIMACTERIC AND COGNITION: THE SCORES OF A SAMPLE OF CLIMACTERIC WOMEN IN MINI-MENTAL STATE EXAMINATION AND WORD-LIST MEMORY TEST (ABSTRACT)*. DISSERTATION. RIO DE JANEIRO, 2007.

RITA DE CÁSSIA LEITE FERNANDES**

Introduction: In Brazil, research on cognition and climacteric is scanty, despite the great prevalence of memory complaints in this phase of the female life. The objective of this research was to describe the scores of climacteric women in neuropsychological tests and to verify possible associations with sociodemographic, clinical, gynecological and depressive characteristics.

Method: 156 women, ranging from 40 to 65 years old, were evaluated with two neurocognitive tests and a depressive scale: Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), Word-List Memory Test (WLMT) and CESD (Center for Epidemiological Studies Depressive Scale).

Results: The average scores obtained in MMSE ($M=25.86$; $SD=2.67$) were different to the ones found in other stratum within the Brazilian population only to illiterate climacteric women, who scored higher ($M=21.72$; $SD=3.77$). There was a trend for underscoring only the questions

for attention and copy in the MMSE items. The average score in WLMT was similar to the ones obtained by other authors ($M=18.83$; $SD=3.82$). There were no significant relationships between the average scores on the tests and climacteric period, demographic characteristics, intensity of depressive symptoms and clinical or gynecological conditions, except for lower scores obtained by hypertensive women in WLMT. The Z score of nine women (5.7%) were found to be below 1.5 SD in WLMT.

Conclusions: We concluded that these average scores, in a specific population cut point, did not exhibit differences chargeable to their peculiar characteristics. The lowering of attention may justify some of the frequent memory complaints of climacteric women. The low scores obtained by some women in the WLMT requires further investigations.

Key words: climacteric, menopause, cognition, depression, neuropsychological tests.

*Climatério e cognição: desempenho de um grupo de mulheres climatéricas no mini-exame do estado mental e no teste de memória da lista de palavras (Resi,p). Dissertação de Mestrado, Instituto Fernandes Figueira / Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (FIOCRUZ) - Rio de Janeiro (Área: Saúde Coletiva). Orientadoras: Lizanka Paola de Figueirrrfp; Sílvia Eliane Vasconcelos Zahar.

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FREQUENCY OF MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER IN HTLV-I INFECTED PATIENTS (ABSTRACT)*. DISSERTATION. RIO DE JANEIRO, 2007.

ALESSANDRO ROCHA MILAN DE SOUZA**

Introduction: Symptoms of depression are fairly common among hospitalized patients and they are part of the diagnostic criteria for major depressive episode, as defined by DSM-IV. These symptoms consist of changes in appetite, sleep disturbances, agitation or psychomotor retardation, fatigue or loss of energy, feelings of uselessness or excessive guilt, a decrease in thinking capacity or in concentration and recurring thoughts about death. Major depression is characterized by changes in mood and in interest levels, as well as other

symptoms, that persist in a period of at least two weeks. It occurs at a rate of 2 to 6.6% in the population at large and 5 to 10% in hospitalized patients. Symptoms of depression are common during or following viral infections. Nevertheless, showing an association between an episode of major depression and viral infections remains a controversial topic.

Objective: To evaluate the prevalence of the major depression episode and of symptoms of depression in patients infected with the HTLV-I virus.

Method: We prospectively selected 36 patients infected with the HTLV-1 virus. The diagnosis for depression was performed according to DSM-IV criteria. In all of the depressed patients, we applied the Hamilton scale (HAM-D 21 items) in order to quantify the disease. The mini mental health exam was used to exclude patients with cognitive deficiencies.

Results: Ten participants (28%) were suffering from depression, wherein nine were female and one was male. Moderate or severe depression was observed with greater frequency in patients with HAM/TSP (20.0%) when compared with asymptomatic patients (7.7%). Seventy-seven

percent (number=22) presented at least one symptom of depression. The most prevalent symptoms consisted of sleep disturbances, changes in appetite and anhedonia.

Conclusion: This study indicates that there is a higher prevalence of depression among patients infected with the HTLV-1 virus as compared to the general population of hospitalized patients. The authors emphasize the importance of further investigating symptoms of depression in patients infected with HTLV-1, considering the loss of social and professional function that occurs in these cases.

Key words: human T-lymphotropic virus 1, major depression, asymptomatic and HAM/TSP HTLV-1.

*Estudo da frequência do episódio depressivo maior em pacientes portadores do vírus HTLV-1. Dissertação de Mestrado, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), (Área: Neurologia). Orientador: Marzia Puccioni-Sohler.

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MELAS: CLINICAL, BIOCHEMISTRY, ELECTROPHYSIOLOGICAL, MORPHOLOGICAL AND MOLECULAR STUDIES (ABSTRACT)*. DISSERTATION. CURITIBA, 2008.

PAULO JOSÉ LORENZONI**

Introduction: MELAS is one of mitochondrial disease characterized by mitochondrial myopathy, encephalopathy, lactic acidosis, and stroke-like episodes.

Objective: To analyze patients suffering from MELAS at Clinical Hospital of Federal University of Paraná: clinical, laboratorial, biochemistry and histological findings; mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) mutations in tRNA^{Leu(UUR)} gene; and to compare muscle biopsy and molecular analysis of tRNA^{Leu(UUR)} gene as diagnostic method to MELAS syndrome.

Method: Study of 9 patients with MELAS with correlation between clinical findings, laboratorial data, biochemical, radiological and electrophysiological findings. Muscle biopsies were evaluated mainly by modified Gomori-trichrome (MGT), succinate dehydrogenase (SDH) and cytochrome c oxidase (COX) stains. DNAmT was obtained from muscle biopsy specimen. The tRNA^{Leu(UUR)} gene was analyzed by PCR/RLFP and direct sequencing.

Results: The onset was before age 15 years in 6 patients. Stroke-like episodes was present in all patients and the others symptoms reported were vomiting, headache, seizures, weakness, dementia, hearing loss, short stature, ocular symptoms, ataxia and facial neuropathy. Blood lactate levels was increased in 8 patients. Brain image study reveals stroke-like pattern in all patients with unilater-

al lesion in 5 patients and bilateral in 4 patients. Ragged-red fibers (RRF) occurred in MGT (88.8%) and SDH (100%) stains, but the frequency above 2% of RRF was found in 5 patients on MGT stain and in 8 patients on SDH stain. COX stain analysis showed deficient activity one patient. Strongly succinate dehydrogenase-reactive blood vessels (SSV) occurred in 5 patients which frequency ranged from 33.3% to 75% in these cases. The molecular analysis was possible in 6 patients that showed A3243G mutation on mtDNA in 3 patients.

Conclusion: MELAS patients have variations in their clinical manifestation, but the main dysfunctions of MELAS syndrome, as encephalopathy, stroke-like, headache, vomiting and increased lactate levels can be found in all patients. Stroke-like lesions are more common in temporal, occipital and parietal regions. COX deficiency can occur in MELAS patients. RRF presence was increased in SDH than in MGT stain. Absent SSV in muscle biopsy specimens should not be used as exclusion criteria for MELAS. A3243G point mutation is the most related with the MELAS phenotypic in tRNA^{Leu(UUR)} gene. Muscle biopsy as diagnostic method is better than molecular analysis of tRNA^{Leu(UUR)} gene in MELAS syndrome.

Key words: MELAS, mitochondrial myopathy, muscle biopsy, mitochondrial DNA.

*MELAS: estudo clínico, bioquímico, eletrofisiológico, morfológico e molecular. Dissertação de Mestrado, Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR) (Área: Medicina Interna). Orientadora: Rosana Herminia Scola. Suporte: Fundação Araucária, CAPES e CNPq.

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