

The Non-Motor Symptoms of Filipino Patients with Parkinson's Disease

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Abstract : Background: Parkinson's disease (PD) is a chronic progressive, neurodegenerative disorder known for its motor symptoms such as bradykinesia, resting tremor, muscle rigidity, and postural instability. Patients with PD also experience non-motor symptoms (NMS) such as depression, fatigue, and sleep disturbances that are most of the time unrecognized by clinicians. This may be due to the lack of spontaneous reports from the patients or partly because of the lack of systematic questioning from the healthcare professional. There is limited data with regards to these NMS especially that of Filipino patients with PD. Objectives: This study aims to determine the non-motor symptoms of Filipino patients with Parkinson's disease. Materials and Methods: This is a prospective, cohort study involving thirty-four patients of Filipino-descent diagnosed with PD in three out-patient clinics in Cebu City from April to September 2014. Each patient was interviewed using the Non-Motor Symptom Scale (NMSS). A Cebuano version of the NMSS was also provided for the non-English speaking patients. Interview time was approximately ten to fifteen minutes for each respondent. Results: Of the thirty-four patients with Parkinson's disease, majority was noted to be males (N=19) and the disease was noted to be more prevalent in patients with a mean age of 62 (SD±9) years old. Hypertension (59%) and diabetes mellitus (29%) were the common co-morbidities in the study population. All patients presented more than one NMS, with insomnia (41.2%), poor memory (23.5%) and depression (14.7%) being the first non-motor symptoms to occur. Symptoms involving mood/cognition (mean=2.21), and attention/memory (mean=2.05) were noted to be the most frequent and of moderate severity. Based on the NMSS, the symptoms that were noted to be mild and often to occur were those that involved the mood/cognition (score=3.84), attention/memory (score=3.50), and sleep/fatigue (score=3.00) domains. Levodopa-Carbidopa, Ropinirole, and Pramipexole were the most frequently used medications in the study population. Conclusion: Non-motor symptoms (NMS) are common in patients with Parkinson's disease (PD). They appear at the time of diagnosis of PD or even before the motor symptoms manifest. The earliest non-motor symptoms to occur are insomnia, poor memory, and depression. Those pertaining to mood/cognition and attention/memory are the most frequent NMS and they are of moderate severity. Identifying these NMS by doing a questionnaire-guided interview such as the Non-Motor Symptom Scale (NMSS) before they can become more severe and affect the patient's quality of life is a must for every clinician caring for a PD patient. Early treatment and control of these NMS can then be given, hence, improving the patient's outcome and prognosis.

Keywords : non motor symptoms, Parkinson's Disease, insomnia, depression

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