The Relationship between Level of Anxiety and the Development of Children with Growth Hormone Deficiency

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Abstract : Interactions between mother's psychological condition and child's health status are complex and derive from the nature of the mother-child relationship. The aim of the study was to analyze the issue of anxiety amongst mothers of short children in the aspect of growth hormone therapy. The study was based on a group of 101 mothers of originally short-statured children – 70 with growth hormone deficiency (GHD) treated with recombinant human growth hormone (rhGH) and 31 undergoing the diagnostic process, without any treatment. Collected medical data included child's gender, height and weight, chronological age, bone age delay, and rhGH therapy duration. For all children, the height SDS and BMI SDS were calculated. To evaluate anxiety in mothers, the Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) was used. Obtained results revealed low trait anxiety levels, with no statistically significant differences between the groups. State anxiety levels were average when mothers of all children were analyzed together, but when divided into groups, statistical differences appeared. Mothers of children without diagnosis and treatment had significantly higher levels of state anxiety than mothers of children with GHD receiving appropriate therapy. These results show, that the occurrence of growth failure in children is not related to high maternal trait anxiety, but the lack of diagnosis and lack of appropriate treatment generates higher levels of maternal state anxiety than the process of rh GH therapy in the offspring. Commencement of growth hormone therapy induce a substantial reduction of the state anxiety in mothers, and the duration of treatment causes its further decrease.

Keywords : anxiety, development, growth hormone deficiency, motherhood

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