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# [Screening for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in adult patients in primary care].

[Article in Spanish]

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**AIMS.** To estimate the proportion of adult patients in primary care with a positive screening test for attention deficit hyper-activity disorder (ADHD) and to analyse their characteristics.

**PATIENTS AND METHODS.** A cross-sectional descriptive study was performed in nine primary care clinics in the province of Tarragona. The sample consisted of 432 consecutive patients in primary care who visited for any reason, with ages ranging from 18 to 55 years. Screening for ADHD was carried out by means of the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale (ASRS). Data about functional impact (Sheehan Disability Inventory) were obtained and a review of the patient records provided data concerning psychiatric comorbidity and the consumption of psychopharmaceuticals.

**RESULTS.** The percentage of positive results in the screening tests was 19.9% (95% CI = 16.4-23.9%). Taking into account the sensitivity and specificity of the ASRS, the 'real' prevalence was estimated to be 12.5% (95% CI = 8.2-16.8%). None of these patients were diagnosed or treated for ADHD. Positive screening tests are associated with occupational, social and familial dysfunction, and greater perceived stress. There is also a higher level of comorbidity with affective disorders and substance abuse, as well as greater use of psychopharmaceuticals.

**CONCLUSIONS.** Screening for ADHD in adult patients in primary care gives rise to a notably high proportion of positive screening test results, which suggests that there could be a significant prevalence of patients with ADHD. These data contrast with the absence of this diagnosis in the patient records. Further research is needed to determine the usefulness of the diagnosis of ADHD and the possible role that must be played by primary care.

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