
ADHD-related symptoms, emotional/behavioral problems, and physical conditions in Taiwanese children with epilepsy.

Tsai FJ, Liu ST, Lee CM, Lee WT, Fan PC, Lin WS, Chiu YN, Gau SS.

Department of Psychiatry, National Taiwan University Hospital, Taipei, Taiwan; Department of Psychiatry, En Chu Kong Hospital, New Taipei City, Taiwan.

J Formos Med Assoc. 2013 Jul;112(7):396-405. doi: 10.1016/j.jfma.2011.08.022.

BACKGROUND/PURPOSE:

Little is known about whether Asian children with epilepsy have more attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)-related symptoms, emotional/ behavioral problems, and physical conditions compared with those described in Western studies. The authors investigated the rates of ADHD-related symptoms, emotional/behavioral problems, and physical conditions among pediatric patients with epilepsy.

METHODS:

We recruited 61 patients with epilepsy, aged 6-16 years, and 122 age-, sex-, and parental education-matched school controls. Data on demographics, parental reports on the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) and Swanson, Nolan, and Pelham, version IV scale (SNAP-IV), and medical records were collected.

RESULTS:

The average full-scale intelligence quotient of the case group was 95.8. There were 11 (18.0%), 7 (11.5%), 26 (42.6%), and 26 (42.6%) of children with epilepsy ever clinically diagnosed with developmental delay, overt ADHD symptoms, allergies reported by physicians, and behavior problems measured by the CBCL, respectively. Those children with epilepsy had more severe ADHD-related symptoms and a wider range of emotional/behavioral problems than controls (Cohen's d 0.36-0.80). The rate of potential cases of ADHD among children with epilepsy was 24.6%. A history of developmental delay predicted ADHD-related symptoms and internalizing and externalizing problems. Among children with epilepsy, a longer duration of treatment with antiepileptic drugs predicted externalizing problems, and an earlier onset of epilepsy predicted inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity.

CONCLUSION:

Our findings imply that clinicians should assess physical and emotional/behavioral problems among children with epilepsy in order to provide interventions to offset possible adverse psychiatric outcomes.

Copyright © 2012. Published by Elsevier B.V.

KEYWORDS:

attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, developmental delay, epilepsy, externalizing problems, internalizing problems