

Psychosocial evaluation of heart transplantation candidates

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Introduction

In the last decades researchers of heart transplantation (HT) programs have explored the importance of proper patient selection and have attempted to identify the existence of psychosocial factors that might influence the clinical outcome before and after the transplantation.

Objective

Describe epidemiological, psychiatric and psychological features of a large sample of HT candidates during the waiting list period.

Methods

Design:

Cross-sectional, observational and descriptive study.

Sample:

125 adult patients included consecutively in waiting list for HT between 2006 and 2012 were evaluated. All the patients were previously assessed by the HT medical team committee of Hospital Clínic of Barcelona and were suitable for being included in the program and meet general cardiology criteria for HT candidates.

Assessments and procedure:

A cross-sectional psychiatric and psychological assessment of the candidates was performed at the moment of being included in the HT waiting list using the following questionnaires: HADS, SCID-CV, COPE, NEO-FFI-R, Apgar-Family and Multidimensional Health Locus of Control.

Results

- Patients were aged 55.47 ± 10.9 years. The mean of cardiac disease duration before transplantation was 9.86 ± 8.2 years.
- Axis I diagnoses were present in a 30.4% of patients of the sample, all of them included in depressive, anxiety, sleep and adjustment disorders. The mean score of HADS was 11.52 (SD = 6.3).
- COPE showed that this group of patients used most frequently engagement strategies, mainly acceptance and positive reinterpretation (> 70%).
- NEO-FFI-R scores: conscientiousness 35.4, agreeableness 34.3, openness 28.3, extraversion 27.7 and neuroticism 20.9.
- The mean score of family function test was 9.1 points.
- Locus of Control scores: doctors and other powerful people 26.67, internality 22.1 and chance 19.12.

Conclusions

Our HT candidates sample presents:

- High prevalence of axis I diagnose
- Mainly use of adaptative coping strategies
- NEO-FFI-R scores similar to general healthy population
- A good family function
- Locus of control profile similar to other severe diseases

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DISCLOSURE:

No potential conflict of interest.

