

Characteristics of comorbid substance use disorders in hospitalized patients with bipolar disorder

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INTRODUCTION

Concurrent Bipolar disorder (BD) and substance use disorder (SUD) is common in clinical practice. Cannabis is the most common illicit drug used by SUD patients. Published data suggest that cannabis use is associated with several negative consequences, higher severity of illness and greater noncompliance tot treatment among individuals with BD.

METHODS

All the subjects diagnosed of BD according to DSM-IV-TR criteria, consecutively admitted to a Dual Diagnosis Unit where included in the study. The sociodemographic, substance use and psychopathological background were collected by protocol “ad hoc” during the admission. Statistical analysis was performed by using SPSS program.

RESULTS

A total of 66 subjects were included, mainly men (84.8%) with a mean age of 37.7 years (SD=11.7) (table 1). The main reason for admission was behavior disorder (37.8%), mania (25.8%), hallucinations/delusions (15.2%), depression (12.1%) and suicide attempt (9.1%) (Figure 1). GAF was 39.8 (SD=10’3) at admission and 60.6 (SD=10’0) at discharge (p<0.001). Mean length of admission was 24.9 days (SD=17.9). Aggressive behavior, suicide attempts, criminal record and incarceration history was 34.8%, 27.3%, 36.4% and 10.4% respectively. 77.3% didn't follow regular treatment in the last 6 months and 37.9% had previous admissions. Main drug at admission was cannabis (34.8%), cocaine (33.3%) and alcohol (24.2%) (Figure 2). Results of polidrug abuse and age of onset of initial consumption and SUD are shown in tables 2 and 3.

Table 1. Characteristics of patients with concurrent BD/SUD admitted in a Dual Diagnosis Unit. (n= 66)

Age (years)	37.7 (SD=11.7)
Male	56 (84.8 %)
Single	43 (65.2 %)
Married	11 (16.7 %)
Separated / Divorced	12 (18.2 %)
Illiterate	3 (4.5%)
Primary studies	23 (34.8%)
Secondary	40 (60.6%)
Actively working	11 (16.7%)
Homeless	11 (16.7%)

Table 2. Number of comorbid SUD among bipolar patients.

SUD*	N	%
1	27	40.9
2	16	24.2
3	16	24.2
4	2	3.0
5	5	7.6

SUD: Substance Used Disorder. *Nicotine SUD not included

Table 3. Onset age of consumption/SUD.

Substance	Onset age of consumption	Onset age of SUD
Alcohol	14.7 (4.1)	21.11 (8.1)
Cannabis	15 (2.7)	15.4 (2.3)
Cocaine	19.8 (5.5)	26.1 (8.5)
Heroine	20.8 (6.3)	22.7 (7.1)
Sedatives	25.6 (9.6)	26.0 (8.7)

Onset age of consumption: in years (SD); Onset age of SUD: in years (SD)

CONCLUSIONS

Patients with BD and comorbid SUD appear to be a complex population with need for enhanced clinical monitoring. The alarmingly early age of onset for alcohol and cannabis use should encourage preventive efforts, especially in the adolescent population.

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OBJECTIVES

Describe the characteristics of patients with concurrent BD/SUD admitted in a Dual Diagnosis Unit.

Figure 1. Main reason for admission

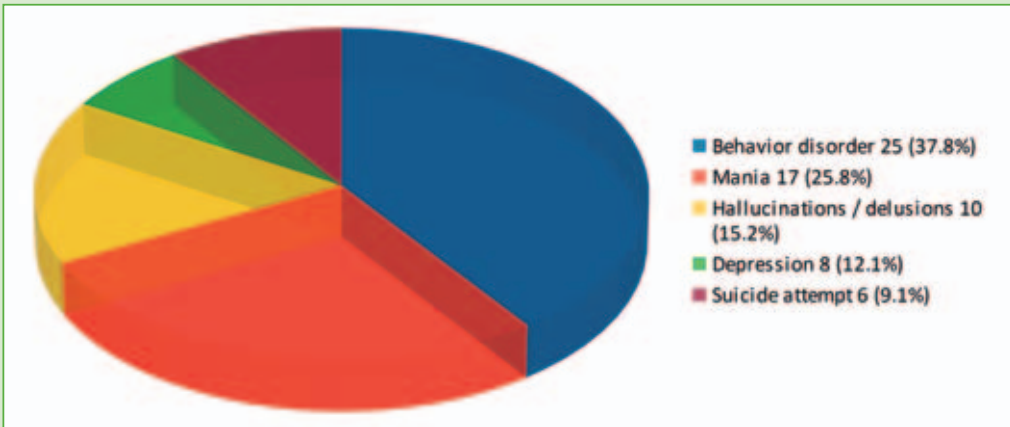
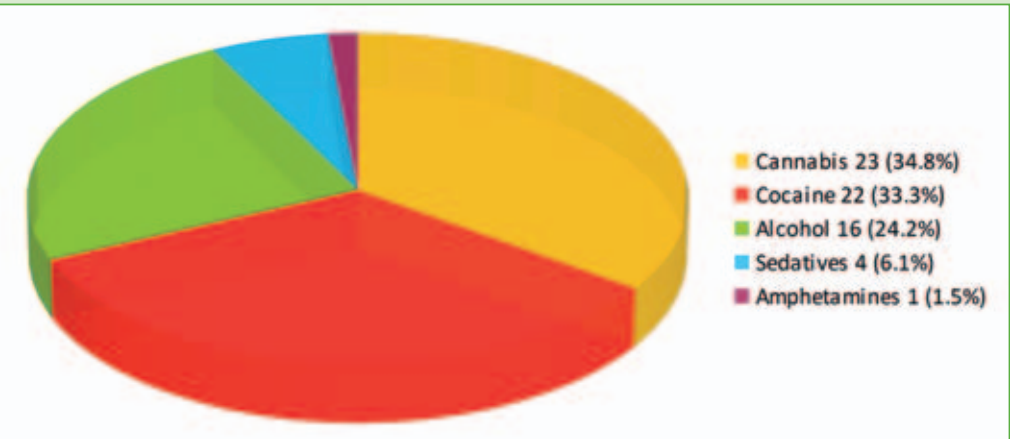


Figure 2. Main drug at admission



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