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Adult Psychiatric Comorbidities of Attention-deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Diagnosed in Childhood—Systematic Review

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Introduction:

ADHD is one of the most frequent neurodevelopment disorders with variable persistence into adulthood. Adults with ADHD have been found to have a greater risk for other comorbid psychiatric disorders.

Objectives/Aims:

The aim of this study was to identify psychiatric disorders with higher rates of comorbidity with ADHD than would be expected from the base rates of those disorders in the population at large.

Methods:

Systematic review of longitudinal prospective studies. Pubmed and PsycINFO search up to September 2014, using 'ADHD' and 'adult', combined with 'comorbidity' or 'outcome' and 'longitudinal' or 'prospective' as search terms.

Results:

We found 8 studies that met our inclusion criteria. All of them have shown that ADHD persisted into adulthood in a significant percentage of children with ADHD. Elevated rates of antisocial personality disorder (ASD) have also been shown in all studies. Higher rates of major depressive disorder and substance use disorder across lifetime have been reported in four of those studies, with the others showing no differences between ADHD and control group. Three studies have shown higher rates of anxiety disorders and bipolar disorder. One study of ADHD girls has shown higher rates of eating disorders in females with childhood ADHD. Only one study evaluated other personality disorders than ASD, reporting elevated rates of passive-aggressive personality disorder, histrionic personality disorder and borderline personality disorder in adults with childhood ADHD.

Conclusion:

Only ASD showed consistent comorbidity with ADHD in all studies. More studies are needed to extract accurate conclusions.