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DOES GENDER HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THE NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL DAMAGE IN COCAINE ADDICTS?

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Records: Taking into account the differences on the basal cognitive performance, pattern of drug use, and the influence of menstrual cycle on cerebral blood flow and neuronal loss, it is expected to find differences on the neuropsychological damage resulting of chronic cocaine use according to the patient's gender.

Objective: To know about the influence of the gender factor on the neurophysiological damage as a result of chronic use of cocaine.

Experiment and method: Using a neurophysiological assessment battery (digit (WAIS-III), Trail Making, Card's, Zoo's (BADS), and Wisconsin Card test), we compare the performance between males (N= 19) and females (N= 5). This assessment is part of a wider observational prospective study with a control group, to study neurophysiology damage caused by the chronic consumption of cocaine (Project MSC-2005/465 (DGPNSD)).

Results: The mean age on our sample is 36.0 years (ds: 6.3); mean of schooling time was 8.4 years. 83.3% consume cocaine daily, but only 12.5% injected intravenously. The average of daily cocaine consumption is 1.5 gr (ds: 1.3). 87.5% use also other illegal substances.

No statistically significant differences were found between the two groups in any of the tests applied. The adjustment was made considering different patterns of drug use, schooling time and other variables. In the others analysis of the same tests in the group control neither did we find any different evidence in gender factor.

Conclusions: Differences according to gender could not be found. On the statistical adjustment, pattern of cocaine use and previous cognitive function were considered.