

COVID-19 pandemic may have negatively impacted the quality of sleep among various populations. However, individuals respond differently to the stress, uncertainty and social isolation related with COVID-19 pandemic.

Objectives: This study aimed to explore the changes in sleep quality and pattern among voluntary psychiatric patients visiting our clinic in Romania during COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods: We implemented a cross-sectional study over a period of 3 months, utilizing a Romanian-translated version of the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) which was administered through Google Forms web application. Participants lacking digital skills were provided with guidance for completing the questionnaire. Informed consent was obtained prior to participating in this study and data anonymity and confidentiality were ensured.

Results: Among a total of 98 responders, 63% reported a global PSQI score greater than 5, indicating poor sleep. Approximately 25% of participants subjectively marked their sleep as either fairly bad or very bad. When analysing the 7 components of PSQI, our participants struggled most with long sleep latency. About a third of participants reported using sleep medication (both prescription and over-the-counter) three or more times a week within the past month.

Conclusions: Considering the fact that the current situation is likely to evolve for an unknown period of time, there is a dire need to assess the effect of prolonged adjustments in daily routine and their impact on the sleep and the quality of life of our patients.

Keywords: COVID-19; sleep quality; Insomnia

EPP0336

The individual patterns of anxieties and defense mechanisms in COVID pandemic context

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Introduction: The COVID-pandemic context is characterized by a global ambiguity, reflecting the unexpected onset of pandemic, unpredictability and amplitude of the related dangers, questionability and the side effects of the policy measures used to protect people.

Objectives: The development of theoretical framework for understanding variability in the reactions to COVID situation and self-regulatory mechanisms.

Methods: Conceptualization and analysis of individual psychotherapy cases in the framework of psychodynamic approach.

Results: Five typical patterns of anxiety, defensive functioning and mentalization structures were identified: Paranoid pattern is marked by flooding with persecutory anxiety, exaggerated subjective uncertainty, reflected in chaotic boundlessness, incoherence, fantasies of hostility, splitting and polarization of self and others. Depressive pattern reflects inability to sustain ambiguity due to deficiency of internal supports, overly dependence on others, conformity, obedience to authority and denial of personal standards and individuality. Noogenic pattern refers to negative affective states, generated by the ambiguity, contradictions and ambivalence of information. The means to regulate it include the lowering of the level of psychical functioning, with cognitive simplification, preference for order, routine and predictability.

Transgression pattern suggests maniacal fascination with the dissipation of limits, normative restraints and rules, and the triumph of the narcissistic-perfectionist permissiveness. Constructivity pattern consists of the pleasure from explorations and insights, creation of new meanings, creative reappraisal and reconstruction of ambiguous situations.

Conclusions: The typical patterns of experiencing ambiguity that were singled out may have diagnostic and prognostic significance in evaluating the individual resource potential in situations of COVID related dangers and isolation.

Keywords: Covid; mentalization; psychological defences; self-regulation

EPP0337

Prevalence of depressive and anxiety symptoms in chronically ill children and adolescents during COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown: Preliminary findings of a pediatric hospital in Italy.

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Introduction: Psychological problems are common among the pediatric population suffering from a chronic illness, especially compared to the normal population. Stressful life events, such as social distancing measures implemented to counter the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, can strongly influence their epidemiology.

Objectives: The aim of this study was to assess the prevalence rate of depressive and anxiety symptoms among an Italian pediatric population affected by chronic illness and already under a Children Hospital psychological follow-up program during COVID-19 lockdown.

Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional study among 54 Italian children and adolescents affected by chronic illness (mean age: 15y; range: 8.9-18y) during the COVID-19 epidemic period. We assessed depressive and anxiety symptoms with the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) and the Generalized Anxiety Disorders (GAD-7) questionnaire during scheduled follow-up checks or teleconsulting.

Results: Preliminary results showed an elevated prevalence of depressive and anxiety symptoms (51% and 48% respectively) among chronically ill children during the COVID-19 outbreak. When compared with a non-ill pediatric population (Zhou et al. 2020), rates are + 7.3% higher for depression and + 10.6% for anxiety.

Conclusions: Chronic ill pediatric patients are a vulnerable group and require careful consideration. For this reason, the healthcare system should be able to implement and guarantee adequate mental health support programs and continuity of care. Further research is necessary since the COVID-19 outbreak could be repeated.

Keywords: COVID-19; Anxiety; Depression; pediatric chronic illness