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### METABOLIC SYNDROME IN BIPOLAR ILLNESS: PATIENT CONCEPTS AND SCREENING EFFECTIVITY

D. Guerreiro, R. Navarro, D. Telles, M. Carvalho, P. Martins, E. Trigo, M. Silva, C. Gois, L. Figueira

*Psychiatry Department, Hospital Santa Maria, Faculdade Medicina Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal*

**Introduction:** Metabolic Syndrome (MS) is constituted by a set of specific metabolic alterations being postulated that the main dysfunction is insulin resistance. Estimates point to higher prevalence of MS in bipolar patients, between 30 to 35%. Cost-effective screening methods, not recurring to blood test, have been researched.

**Objectives:** Analyse knowledge and importance given to MS in bipolar patients. Test the viability of MS screening without blood tests.

**Methodology:** Observational, cross-sectional study. Random sample of 15 adult bipolar patients, in euthymic phase. Semi-structured interview, YMRS, HAMD were applied. MS diagnosis investigated according to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) criteria. MS screening was defined positive if blood pressure  $\geq 130/85$  or anti-hypertensive medication and abdominal perimeter  $> 90$  in males or  $> 80$  in females. A questionnaire about knowledge, attitudes and concerns on MS was applied.

**Main results:** 14 patients completed the investigation protocol. Five (36%) met IDF criteria for metabolic syndrome. Screening sensitivity was 80% and specificity 78%. Twelve patients (80%) were overweight or obese. Mean IMC in patients that met IDF criteria for MS was 30 while in the other group mean IMC was 26. Only 3 (20%) have ever heard about MS, but the majority of the patients were concerned, in decreasing order, about weight gain, blood pressure cholesterol and hyperglycemia control.

**Conclusions:** Although limited by small sample size, this study strengthens the idea that MS screening can be effective in clinical practice, it also indicates the need to educate BP patients about MS and to prevent overweight.