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Prevalence and Its Correlates of Night Eating Syndrome in Schizophrenic Outpatients

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Objective: The aim of this study was to evaluate the prevalence of night eating syndrome (NES) and its correlates in schizophrenic outpatients.

Methods: The 14 items of self-reported night eating questionnaire (NEQ) was administered to 201 schizophrenic patients in psychiatric outpatient clinic. We examined demographic and clinical characteristics, body mass index (BMI), subjective measures of mood, sleep, binge eating, and weight-related quality of life using Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI), Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), Binge Eating Scale (BES) and Korean version of Obesity-Related Quality of Life Scale (KOQoL), respectively.

Results: The prevalence of night eaters in schizophrenic outpatients was 10.4% (21 of 201). Comparisons between NES group and non-NES group revealed no significant differences in sociodemographic characteristics, clinical status and BMI. Compared to non-NES, patients with NES reported significantly greater depressed mood and sleep disturbance, more binge eating pattern, and decreased weight-related quality of life. While 'morning anorexia' and 'delayed morning meal' (2 of 5 NES core components in NEQ) were not differed between groups, 'nocturnal ingestions', 'evening hyperphagia', and 'mood/sleep' were more impaired in NES group.

Conclusion: These findings are the first to describe the prevalence and its correlates of night eaters in schizophrenic outpatients. These results suggest that NES has negative mental health implications, although it was not associated with obesity. Further study to generalize these results is required.