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Prospective case-control study of interictal depression and suicidal ideation in Nigerians with epilepsy.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Co-morbid depression and suicidal ideation in people with epilepsy (PWE) in developing countries are under-recognised, and so may be consequently undertreated. This study was designed to determine the frequency and clinical correlates of interictal depression and suicidal ideation in PWE.

PATIENTS AND METHODS: Using a prospective design, we evaluated 96 PWE and two groups of controls (103 age- and sex-matched population controls and 13 persons with DSM - IV diagnosis of major depression (controls with depression - CWD) without epilepsy. Depression was assessed using Zung Self-rating depression scale (scores =40 indicating depression).

RESULTS: Depression was more prevalent in PWE (25/96 i.e. 26.0%) than normal controls (10/103 i.e. 9.7%) ($P = 0.004$). Suicidal ideation scores were similar for depressed PWE and depressed normal controls (1.7 ± 1.0 v. 1.5 ± 1.0 ; $P > 0.05$), but significantly higher in CWD ($2.61.3$; $P = 0.04$). Among PWE, mean duration of epilepsy (years) was the only variable significantly related to depression (i.e. 12.7 ± 8.8 in depressed PWE v. 8.3 ± 6.6 in non-depressed PWE ($P = 0.01$)).

CONCLUSION: Depressive symptomatology is a frequent co-morbidity in our tertiary care population of PWE. However, suicidal ideation is less common in contrast to persons with major depression.

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MeSH terms**LinkOut - more resources**

