



MEETING ABSTRACT

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High prevalence of bulimia nervosa in lupic patients

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Background

Systemic erythematosus lupus is a chronic, inflammatory autoimmune disease and its common association with anxiety, depression and other psychiatric disorders is well known. Eating disorders in this particular population are not the center of attention. In this paper we describe the findings of our 9 months study with lupic patients at Hospital das Clinicas.

Materials and methods

We selected and interviewed 82 female patients (aged 18 to 40) suffering from lupus, using Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI), as instrument of interview and diagnostic. Afterwards, patients diagnosed as bulimic were individually analysed.

Results

Twelve of the 82 patients had criteria for bulimia nervosa (14.63 per cent). Those patients had low self-esteem, persistent preoccupation with weight gain related to medication. Many of them were also very preoccupied with other physical aspects, such as skin damage and hair loss.

Conclusions

An alarming high incidence of bulimia nervosa was found in this sample and this may indicate lupic patients are susceptible to eating disorders, considering their exposition to steroids and other medications related to weight gain. More studies are necessary in order to confirm such data.

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