

CLUSTER C PERSONALITY ACCENTUATION IN PATIENTS WITH TAKOTSUBO CARDIOMYOPATHY

Personality traits mark vulnerability

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Takotsubo cardiomyopathy (TC) represents a transient regional systolic dysfunction. Recently, a correlation between TC and acute emotional stress has been discussed under the context of a toxic catecholaminergic effect. Other studies have found higher incidences of anxiety disorders and major depression in patients with TC (Christensen et al. 2016, Madias 2016a, Madias 2016b, El-Sayed et al. 2012).

We explored personality traits, affective symptoms and coping with stress in a sample of 22 patients with TC (post-acute interval: 5 years; mean age: 70.9±12 years) compared with 20 patients with major depression. The protocol for the study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, and it is conformed to the provisions of the Declaration of Helsinki. All probands gave their informed consent and their anonymity was preserved. For the study we used the following rating scales: the Beck Depression Inventory II (Beck et al. 2006, german version), the IKP-G and IKG-Eg (Andresen 2006, german version) and the SVF (Janke W, Erdmann G, Kallus W & Boucsein W 1997, german version).

Depressive symptoms were significantly elevated for the patients with major depression compared with the TC patients ($p < 0.05$). With regard to personality ratings (IKG), 46% of the TC patients exhibited accentuations in typical cluster C personality traits, such as anxiety, dependent traits and obsessive compulsive traits. The patients with major depression lacked marked incidences specific to any personality cluster. Furthermore, the TC patients showed no abnormalities, positive or negative, with regard to coping with stress (SVF scales).

We therefore implicate personality traits, mainly those consistent with cluster C personality disorders, as important signs of vulnerability to TC instead of reflecting a supposed maladaptive stress syndrome. This

finding should be addressed as part of the clinical management of TC and its post-acute treatment through early psychotherapeutic interventions.

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Helge H. Müller, Wolfgang Sperling: conception and design of the study;

Helge H. Müller, Wolfgang Sperling, Johannes Kornhuber: acquisition and analysis of data; drafting the manuscript.

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