

Psychological aspects in early and late-onset depression

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Thesis ; M.D. 1993

The study was an effort to clarify (if any) the significance of age at onset in major depression. The sample was grouped into five groups. Group 1 (early onset unipolar depressive group) included 33 unipolar depressive patients their age ranged from 15 - 32, and age of onset was between 12 - 30. Group 2 (late onset unipolar depressive group) included 37 unipolar depressive patients, their age ranged between 40 - 72 and their age of onset was between 39 - 68. Group 3 (early onset, late age unipolar depressive group) included 18 unipolar depressive patients, their age ranged between 41- 66 and their age of onset was between 18 - 30. Group 4 (young group of normal controls) it included 15 normal subjects their age ranged between 15 - 32. Group 5 (older group of normal controls) included 15 normal subjects, their age ranged between 40 - 65. Age of onset was defined as the age at which the patient first developed definite depressive symptoms.

All subjects of the study (patients and normal controls) performed the following scales : Adjustment scale, Hamilton rating scale for depression, Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and Psychosocial Stressors Rating. From the results obtained, it was concluded that there was no clinical or psychological justification to distinguish early onset from late onset depression. But, the study supported the distinction on bases of familial factors and probably the genetic character.