

Clinical characteristics of bipolar disorder in children and adolescents in Egypt

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Current Psychiatry. Ain Shams University (Print).

2010 v17 n3

To explore differences in demographics, family history and clinical presentation of children and adolescents with bipolar I, bipolar II and bipolar disorder not otherwise specified.

Children and adolescents were assessed by obtaining historical information and Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia for School-Age Children- Present and Lifetime Version (K-SADS-PL), administered individually to the children and adolescents and to their parents. Patients having BD (92 children and 147 adolescents), diagnosed according to DSM-IV criteria were classified into two groups according to age of onset and subtype of BD and compared together regarding their demographic characteristics, family history of psychiatric disorders, psychiatric comorbidity and clinical features. Children with BD showed less functional impairment and psychotic symptoms than adolescents having BD. Children with BD had more comorbid psychiatric disorders than adolescents. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, oppositional disorder and nocturnal enuresis were significantly more prevalent in children than adolescents. Irritable mood and poor judgment were more common in bipolar children while elevated mood, decreased need for sleep, grandiosity, accelerated speech, flight of ideas, distractibility, motor hyperactivity, hypersexuality and psychotic symptoms were more common in adolescents. Functional impairment was significantly more in bipolar adolescents. Children and adolescents with BD showed developmental differences in their clinical characteristics, type of psychiatric comorbidity and degree of functional status.