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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder after Motor Vehicle Accidents

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Abstract

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a chronic and progressive disorder that occurs after some traumas and accident. Injuries and harm to health caused by motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) have become an issue of global concern, as MVAs are expected to be the third largest contributor to the worldwide burden of disease by the year 2020. Chronic PTSD is a common consequence of MVA and that it may persist for years. Women have higher rates of PTSD than men after MVA. In the last years, many studies have evaluated the psychological consequences of MVAs. However, there are discrepancies in epidemiological studies. As an additional issue, other predictors of PTSD immediately after MVA have been established; Signs such as heart rate (HR) and respiratory rate (RR) immediately after injury predict subsequent PTSD remains controversial. Although many studies have shown an association between HR and PTSD, but recent study did not report an association between HR, RR, and PTSD. Elevated HR and RR might reflect initial fear conditioning and thus would be important factors in the mechanism of genesis of PTSD. It seems that, HR and RR they might not be useful indicators of subsequent PTSD among accident survivors in clinical protocols, but any physical reactions like pounding heart might be an alternative to predict subsequent psychiatric morbidity.

Keywords: PTSD, Motor Vehicle, Accident.

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