

CARDIOVASCULAR PREVENTION 2

P362 GENDER DIFFERENCE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS SYMPTOMS IN CARDIAC OUTPATIENTS AT THE TIME OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC. THE ABC STUDY ON HEART DISEASE

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Introduction: COronaVirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) exerts a significant impact on public health since it has reached a pandemic level in March 2020 and a high rate of negative mental health outcomes has been reported in the Italian general population.

Purpose: We aimed to investigate the pandemic impact on the psychological status of, COVID-19 negative, cardiac patients and if there are any gender differences.

Methods: Consecutive COVID-19 free patients who were presented to the cardiac outpatient clinic of Conegliano general hospital were divided into 2 groups according to their presentation, either before or during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The presence or absence of stress symptoms was established based on the patient's

self-assessment psycho-emotion questionnaire based on a reproduced form of Cohen's perceived stress scale.

Results: A total of 310 patients were included in this analysis. Patients' mean age was 65 ± 18.5 years, males were 57% with 128 (41%) and 132 (59%) patients presented before and during the pandemic respectively. Both patients' groups shared most of the demographic and clinical characteristics. In all patients, stress symptoms were reported in (52% VS 60%; $p = 0.15$) for patients who were presented before and during the pandemic, respectively. In male patients, stress symptoms were more frequent in patients who were presented during the pandemic (59%) compared to the pre-pandemic presented male patients (43%); ($p = 0.03$). Yet, no difference in the frequency of stress symptoms was observed in female patients. In an age-adjusted logistic regression analysis, psychological stress was significantly higher in male patients who were presented during the pandemic (Odds Ratio [OR]=2.0; 95% confidence interval [CI]=1.1-3.6; $p = 0.03$). Although, no significant difference was observed in female patients (OR = 0.8; 95% CI = 0.4-1.7; $p = 0.63$). Same results were obtained using the fully adjusted model, (OR = 1.9; 95% CI = 1.0-3.5; $p = 0.04$) and (OR = 0.8; 95% CI = 0.4-1.7; $p = 0.64$), for male and female patients, respectively.

Conclusion: Psychological stress symptoms has been observed more frequently in male patients seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, with almost double risk compared to the pre-pandemic, independently from baseline clinical characteristics. No difference in the frequency of stress symptoms was observed in female patients.