

Attention Deficit (Hyperactive) Disorder: The Frequency of Parental History of AD(H)D and/or Anxiety in AD(H)D Children Treated with Psychostimulants

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Background: Many studies suggest a relationship between attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder (AD(H)D) and anxiety (Anx). Among the controversies, is whether psychostimulants cause an increase in anxiety-.... (Bagwell 2006). Additionally, an increased frequency of both AD(H)D and Anx has been observed in the families of AD(H)D children (Vance 1999), but the relationship is unclear.

Objectives: To supplement an investigation of changes in Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) anxiety T scores pre and post administration of psychostimulant therapy, with or without concomitant atypical neuroleptic therapy, we also assessed the frequency of parental history of AD(H)D and/or Anx.

Methods: Retrospective chart analysis of 134 (M-98/F-36) referred students (mean age: 10.2 years +/- 3.4) diagnosed with AD(H)D by DSMIV behavioral and cognitive measures with parent completed CBCL both before and after treatment with a psychostimulant with or without concomitant atypical neuroleptics therapy at least 4 months apart. The analysis included DSMIV criterion referenced evidence of AD(H)D and/or Anx in subject parents.

Results: N=119 (15 adopted excluded from family hx data)
7/119 =5.8% both AD(H)D and Anx in a parental pair (only 2 coexist in a single parent, both mother)
29/119 =24% parental history of only AD(H)D (M-16/F-15, 2 Co-occur in both parents)
15/119 =13% parental history of only Anx (M-5/F-10)

Conclusion:

- Anx is a prevalent comorbid dx in AD(H)D children and their parents
- However, both Anx and AD(H)D uncommonly coexist in the same parent
- The mechanism of the above association/dissociation awaits clarification

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