Demographic and clinical manifestations of psychogenic non-epileptic seizures: the impact of co-existing epilepsy in patients or their family members.

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Abstract

PURPOSE: The aim of the current study was to clarify the impact of co-existing epileptic seizures (either in patients themselves or in their family members) on the demographic and clinical characteristics and manifestations of psychogenic non-epileptic seizures (PNES).

METHODS: In this prospective study, all patients with a definite diagnosis of PNES were recruited at the epilepsy center at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences from September 2008 through May 2012. We subdivided the patients into three groups: those with PNES but without either epilepsy or a family history of epilepsy (group 1); those with PNES and concomitant epilepsy but without a family history of epilepsy (group 2); and those with PNES and a family history of epilepsy but without concomitant epilepsy (group 3). We studied the demographic and clinical findings and associated risk factors among these three groups.

RESULTS: One hundred and eighty-eight patients had confirmed diagnosis of PNES at our center, of whom 32 patients (17%) had confirmed epilepsy. In total, 176 patients met our inclusion criteria and were studied: 103 patients in group 1, 19 patients in group 2, and 54 patients in group 3. Demographic characteristics, seizure characteristics, and semiology in these three groups of patients with PNES were similar. They reported similar associated factors for PNES.

CONCLUSION: Epilepsy is relatively common among patients with PNES. The demographic and clinical characteristics of patients with PNES are similar in those with or without co-existing epilepsy (in themselves or among their family members).