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TRACKING DEPRESSION IN ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS USING PHQ-9 QUESTIONNAIRE

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BACKGROUND

Ankylosing spondylitis (AS) is a chronic disease that tackles young age adults, with important implications on the patient's physical and mental health. Chronic pain and deformities resulting from this diagnosis tend to show many associations with a depressive framework. The use of instruments to evaluate possible depression diagnosis on these patients, with proper and specific orientation, is of great importance. The Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) is a questionnaire that foresees the presence of each one of the symptoms that characterize a major depressive disorder, described at the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Transversal and quantitative study, conducted at the rheumatology ambulatory of a public hospital. Ankylosing spondylitis patients, according to the modified New York criteria, were available using the PHQ-9 questionnaire. The ethics committee approved, and all participants signed the free and clarified consent term.

RESULTS

The study included a total of 104 patients, in which 74% were male. Sixty percent were below 45 years, and 68% had the diagnosis for more than six years. Ten percent were smokers, and alcohol usage was observed on 21% of the sample. Thirty percent were unemployed, 27% retired, and 43% were professionally active. A total of 38 patients (36.5%) scored above 9 on the PHQ-9, indicative of a problematic depressive state, and 6 scored above 20, which is considered criteria for significant depression disorder. The factors considered to be associated with a depressive state were an extended disease and higher schooling levels. Alcohol usage, smoking, and exercise did not show any association with the depressive state.

CONCLUSION

Ankylosing spondylitis, with its chronic and disabling nature, shows high relation with depression. The PHQ-9 is a simple questionnaire to apply that can benefit from tracking signs and symptoms of this pathology, allowing a more proper conduct for these patients, while preserving their quality of life.