Post-Stroke Depression

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"Stroke is defined as a sudden loss of blood supply to the brain leading to permanent tissue damage caused by thrombotic, embolic, or hemorrhagic events. Almost 85% of strokes are ischemic, while 12% are hemorrhagic.”
Robinson, RG & Jorge, RE(2016)

In 2015, the statistics from the American Heart Association showed there were 700,000 strokes in the United States and 163,000 related deaths.

Depression is common after stroke, affecting approximately one third of stroke survivors at any one time after a stroke (compared with 5%-13% of adults without stroke). The frequency is highest in the first year, at nearly 1 in 3 stroke survivors, and declines thereafter.
Towfighi, A et al (2016)
Risk Factors of PSD

Factors that predict increased risk of PSD following a stroke:

- Physical disability
- Stroke severity
- Cognitive impairment
- Prior history of depression
- Lack of family
- Lack of social support after stroke
- Anxiety after stroke

PSD

Not as clear/mixed results:

- Age
- Gender
- Lesion location

PSD

PSD and Functional Outcomes

How does post-stroke depression affect recovery?

PSD may lead to poorer functional outcomes by limiting participation in rehabilitation and/or directly decreasing physical, social, and cognitive function. PSD is also associated with higher mortality after a stroke.

Screening for PSD

What does post-stroke depression look like?
Symptoms of Depression

- Poor sleep-restless sleep
- Wanting to sleep all the time
- Poor appetite
- Lack of energy
- Poor concentration
- Feeling worthless
- Recurrent thoughts of death/dying
- Sad, low mood-most of time for an extended time
- Loss of interest, pleasure in things you would normally enjoy
- Suicidal thoughts

Screening Tools

- Beck Depression Inventory
- Geriatric Depression Scale
- Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS)
- Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)
- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)

Does screening for PSD improve outcomes?

Depends on follow through.

Diagnosis of PSD

Major Depression - adjustment disorder - no diagnosis

Grief vs Depression

"It is the process of separating what has been lost from what has not been lost, and reestablishing a sense of meaning and purpose in life."

Joseph Hinkenbein & Renee Stucky (2008)
Can be confused with PSD

- PBA - pseudo bulbar affect
- Post-stroke apathy

Treatment of Post-Stroke Depression

- Medications may be effective in treating PSD. Primarily SSRIs and some use of psycho-stimulants.
- Psychosocial interventions may be useful and effective in treating PSD.
- TMS (transcranial magnetic stimulation) may be an option for patients who do not respond to antidepressants.
- ECT (electroconvulsive therapy) is a last resort to treat refractory PSD.

Additional Topics Covered

- Prevention: A pooled analysis of studies looking at prevention of PSD in stroke patients showed the likelihood of developing PSD was reduced with the use of a SSRI antidepressant.

  - For example, one study - Robinson et al (2008) showed after one year, non-depressed patients given a placebo were four times greater risk of depression than the patients given an antidepressant.

- Caregivers: have an increased risk of depression and developing health problems.

  - One study, Berg, A. Palomaki, H. et al (2005) indicated depression rates of caregivers may exceed that of stroke patients.

Assessment and Interventions in the Hospital
My Consult Flowsheet
- Record review
- Grief vs Depression
- Anxiety
- Sleep
- Appetite
- Social Support
- Coping

Psychosocial Interventions
- Education
- Allow to process feelings/grief
- Explore/Challenge Beliefs - i.e.- I’m not making any progress; I’m being a burden to my family
- Explore Coping
- Cognitive Behavioral Strategies to help in coping with Anxiety
- Communication skills - family/medical team

Case Study
Betty M
- Age at time of stroke - 49 years, divorced 10 years ago
- Lives alone, one 27-year-old son, lives out of town
- Estranged, works full-time at a call center
- Summer 2008 - heart catheterization due to progressive SOB and weakness when mowing
- Catheterization was clear, but experienced a right ischemic stroke with left hemiparesis
- Scored a moderately depressed on Beck Depression Scale

Consult
- Record review
- Grief vs Depression
- Anxiety
- Sleep
- Appetite
- Social Support
- Coping

Post-Stroke Depression and Quality of Life
Interventions
PSD and QOL

There is not enough research exploring how post-stroke depression affects overall Quality of Life to reach a conclusion.

Some individual studies have found that post-stroke depressive symptoms are associated with reduced post-stoke quality of life.

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