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MEDITATION AND PSYCHOSIS

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Introduction: For the last years, there has been a worldwide increase in the interest of oriental culture, specifically in the practice of meditation. This technic is known to produce cognitive and sensorial perception alterations, with changes in the hormonal and autonomic system. This practice has been associated with different mental disorders such as neurotic manifestations, dissociative and regressive, and even psychotic symptoms.

Objectives: To analyze the influence of an intensive practice of different styles of meditation in the psychopathology found in our patients (Hospital Clínico San Carlos, Madrid). To study the changes produced in the Central Nervous System measured by Electroencephalogram, PET, and functional MRI.

Aims: To define the clinical characteristics, prognosis, risk factors and biological changes of an "atypical" psycopathologic case which seems to be more frequent everyday.

Methods: Extensive bibliographic review focused in psychopathology related to different types of meditation, either auto or hetero-induced (exorcism). We analyzed the patients attended in our hospital with psychotic semiology after having practiced intensive types of meditacion (transcendental meditation, buddhist meditation, tai-chi, qi-gong, tiao-shen, etc).

Results: We found serious psychotic and affective symptomatology produced after using these technics. It is important to point out the risk factors and traumatic experiences characteristic of these processes.

Conclusions: There is clinical and epidemiological evidence that a group of psychosis, with different symptomatology and prognosis than schizophrenia and affective disorders, exists. We describe a syndrome of sudden manifestation, with flourished symptoms and serious behavior alterations, etc.