

PSYCHOMOTOR AGITATION IN A PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY SERVICE

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Introduction: Psychomotor agitation is a relatively frequent condition in Psychiatric Emergency Services. It consists in excessive motor activity and without purpose, with high tension and inability to maintain attention. It carries the risk of compromising the physical integrity of the patient himself or others, usually accompanied by hostility and destructive and / or aggressive behaviors.

Objectives: The authors intend to describe the epidemiological characteristics and the approach of agitated patients in a Psychiatric Emergency Service.

Methods: It was randomly selected a sample of 52 patients who attended the Metropolitan Psychiatric Emergency Service at Centro Hospitalar São João - Oporto for episode of moderate to severe psychomotor agitation, from January 2012 to August 2012.

The authors proceeded to retrospective data collection, including gender, age, diagnosis, the need of physical restraint, the psychotropic therapy instituted and the medical orientation of the patients.

Results: In a sample where the average age of patients is 39.7 years and in which 54% are women, the most common diagnoses were psychosis and manic episodes.

Physical restraint was required in 17% of patients and 48% accepted oral treatment. Diazepam and olanzapine were the most used drugs orally and haloperidol was the most frequent intramuscular / intravenous treatment.

Hospitalization was required in 73% patients.

Conclusions: With the development of new psychotropic drugs, including benzodiazepines and antipsychotics, the need of physical restraint decreased. In agitated patients, immediate action is essential to enable effective and rapid control of symptoms, as most situations are serious and require hospitalization.