

Methods: A prospective cohort study was performed to establish the risk factors associated with alcohol and cocaine dependence. Subjects recruited (N=336), from primary care centres. At baseline were classified as heavy drinkers and cocaine users (HD+Co, N=227) and alcohol abusers with cocaine use (AA+Co, N= 109).

Results: At 4-year follow-up assessment, AA+Co subjects had higher rates of prevalence for cocaine (55% vs. 32%, $p<0.001$) and alcohol dependence (97.5% vs. 58.2%, $p<0.001$) than HD+Co participants. Being alcohol abuser and single were eight and three times, respectively, more likely to develop cocaine dependence. When impulse control disorders or alcohol abuse occurred the odds ratio of developing alcohol dependence was 9 and 5.7 respectively. Also, alcohol abuse at baseline was associated with shortened time between onset of abuse and dependence for cocaine use disorders and for alcohol use disorders.

Conclusions: Alcohol abuse in heavy drinkers with recreational cocaine use predicted alcohol and cocaine dependence at follow-up. Our findings agree with previous findings supporting the relationship between impulsivity and risk for substance use disorders.

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Varieties of impulsivity in males with alcohol dependence: The role of cluster-B personality disorder

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Background/Rationale: Impulsivity has been associated with alcohol dependence, but impulsivity in alcohol-dependent subjects has not been well characterized.

Objectives: Using a variety of laboratory measures of impulsivity, we assessed whether alcohol-dependent patients (ADP) were more impulsive than control subjects, and the role of Cluster-B personality disorders in impulsivity measurements.

Design and measurements: A cross-sectional patient survey with a community comparison group. Diagnoses were made using the Structured Interview for DSM-IV. Sustained attention and rapid-response impulsivity were assessed using the continuous performance test (CPT). Inhibitory control was measured by the stop-signal task (SST). Ability to delay reward task was assessed using differential reinforcement for low-rate responding (DRLR).

Participants and setting: A final sample of 253 males with alcohol-dependence recruited from two alcoholism treatment centres was compared with a matched non-substance-abusing comparison group (n=96).

Results: Patients with alcohol dependence were more impulsive across all behavioural tasks. Alcohol-dependent subjects without personality disorders showed lower efficiency in DRLR than control subjects. Patients with Cluster-B personality disorder performed worse in inhibitory control, but subjects with borderline personality disorder in particular demonstrated increased rates of omission and commission errors in CPT. Inability to delay gratification was associated with antisocial personality disorder.

Conclusions: Our findings support the suggestion of two paradigms in alcohol dependence. The first, based on inability to delay gratification, might be a vulnerability marker for alcohol dependence. The second was related to inhibitory control, and might be specific for antisocial and borderline personality disorders.

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When attachment trauma and addiction both influence the brain: Combination of pharmac- and psychotherapy can cope the problem efficiently

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Background and aims: Current trends that integrate neuroscience, attachment theory and clinical psychiatry suggest that traumatic attachments are imprinted into the developing limbic and autonomic nervous systems of the early maturing right brain. On the other hand addiction is caused by long lasting changes in brain function as a result of pharmacological insult (repeated drug use), genetic disposition and environmental association made with drug use (learning).

Methods and results: From our clinical work it is known that experience of any sort of attachment abuse is not uncommon in alcohol addiction. Issues of violence and sexual abuse in early personal history deeply influence not only partners' relationship, the capacity for intimacy and mutual trust, but also parental function and cooperation. Attachment traumas in addicted patient were supposed to be very resistant in treatment because of mutual reinforcement of both problems (early trauma experience and addiction): such patients were prone to relapse in addiction treatment either because detached traumatic experiences become a source of long lasting manipulation of addicted patient for retaining the "right for drinking" either because of seriously comorbide disorders without appropriate pharmacological treatment.

Conclusions: In our clinical experience, we found attachment trauma psychotherapeutically accessible only after period of stable sobriety and secondly, that routine combination of intensive psycho- and pharmacotherapy gives an optimistic attitude in treatment which is illustrated by clinical vignettes.

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Psychiatric adverse event profile of interferon therapy in drug abusers

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It is well known that incidence of hepatitis C is much higher in risk population known as drug abusers. Interferon implementation in hepatitis C therapy contributed better prognosis for this patients. However during the interferon treatment the risk of psychiatric adverse events increases. Between 20-40% of those patients developed psychiatric adverse events which are one of the main reasons of therapy abrupture. Only intensive psychiatric evaluation and adequate psychopharmacological treatment provide continuation of the interferon therapy. In this paper we observed frequency of interferon therapy and psychopharmacotherapy during the determinate period of on year in drug abusers in our Hospital.

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Towards a phenomenological understanding of addiction

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The question “What is it like to be addicted?” is considered in a phenomenological approach. Normally in the psychiatric discourse addiction is understood as following more or less the original paradigm of “dependency”. This paradigm claims that the addicted depends lifelong and unchangeable upon his drug or “psychotropic technique”. Innerperspective understandings as well as therapeutic interests contradict this unchangeability in their attempt to help the addicted achieving goals such as harm reduction or teetotalism. Strictly understood this would lead to a contradiction in terms of the psychiatric understanding of addiction. Solutions to this problem rely on the dynamics in the process of becoming addicted. In this sense a possible understanding of addiction is presented. Via the idea of “the psychotropic technique becoming absolute” – which can especially be found in the writings of William S. Burroughs – both sides of the psychiatric understanding are combined and integrated. The addicted self and its self-awareness are then understandable as a “fragile monoidentity”. Implications of such an understanding are discussed.

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Alcohol-related problem and adolescence crisis

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Background: youths almost use alcohol or drugs the first time under peer pressure and they want to be accepted and be a part of the group. Using the alcohol they behavior have changed. Alcohol also caused the problems with friendship, family/parents, school, community, law, etc.

Methods: the sample of 20 youth patients (15 male and 5 female) under the age of 16 – 25 were conducted between January – June 2006. on the Department of alcoholism in the Institute on addictions, Belgrade. Data were collected from patient’s history of illness, clinical protocols and psychiatric interviews including the criteria of alcohol abuse and adolescence crisis according to ICD – X.

Aim: to show that alcohol abuse in adolescence period is not just a developmental course, but more serious problem with consequences on behavior and social relationships.

Results:

- 1) to take the other drugs (canabinoides, Ecstasy, sedatives): 11 patients (55%);
- 2) marked fall in academic: 9 patients(45%);
- 3) family problem: 20 patients (100%);
- 4) auto destructive behavior: 7 patients (35%);
- 5) behavior changes (aggressive,hostile,etc.) : 13 patients (65%);
- 6) problem with law: 8 patients (40%);
- 7) risky behavior (unprotected sex): 17 patients(85%).

Conclusions: this study shows that developmental transitions, such as puberty and increasing independence, have been associated with alcohol abuse. Just being an adolescent may be a key risk factor for drinking dangerously and consequential alcohol-related problems.

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Youths binge drinking - the pathways to be dependent

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Background: alcohol is the widespread among youths and the drug of choice. Many young people are experiencing the aversive

symptoms as consequences of drinking too much, at too early of age. Research shows that many alcohol dependent patients start to drink at very young age as a binge drinkers. New research shows that the serious drinking problems typically associated with middle age actually begin to appear much earlier, during young adulthood and period of adolescence.

Methods: data were collected from medical history, psychiatric and clinical records. The 150 male patients were treated for alcohol dependent on the Department of alcoholism (DA) in Institute of addictions, Belgrade, between May 2005- 2006, including the criteria of alcohol dependent according to ICD – X.

Aim: the study shows does adolescence binge drinking may lead to alcohol dependent at middle age and alcoholism at all.

Results: the total of 150 male patients with alcohol dependent at presence, 90 patients (60%) were experiencing of binge drinking before age of 15; 50 patients (33,3%) at age of 15 – 20; 10 patients (6,66%) at age of 20>.

Conclusion: the most of treated and observed male patients on DA who were binge drinking in young adulthood period are alcohol dependent at present and diagnosis verifications by the criteria from ICD-X. Youth and teenage drinking problem may lead to be a pathway for serious adult problem – alcohol dependent and alcoholism, as a developmental and behavior framework.

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The relationship between development identity and internet addiction

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Background: Computer and Internet use by children and adolescents is widespread and begins at an early age. They commonly use computers for playing games, completing school assignments, email, and connecting to the Internet. On-line, the most frequent activities are school work, email, games, and finding information. We investigated factors that influence adolescents’ engagement in risky Internet behavior, in particular the factors relating to development identity.

Methods: All the students, aged between 15 to 18 years old, come from 7 high schools of Iasi. The authors examined the online construction of identity at 283 teenagers, who had been involved in an online activities and completed a survey to assess relationships among development identity and (a) amount of Internet use (with the identification of a possible computer addiction), (b) the interference of excessive use with school grades and social life;

Results indicated that the following factors were found to be predictors of adolescents development: frequency of Internet use, frequency of chatting, parental rules, type of personal information given out, amount of inappropriate messages received, whether inappropriate websites have been visited, and type of internet advice heard.

Conclusions: Our results showed a significant positive correlation between measures of Internet use and time spent online for the Internet. Implications for and development as impacted by social support networks, are discussed. Finally, Internet use was associated with identity status. These results suggest that the Internet may be an important aid for teenager as they searched for an young identity.