EPV0144

Excessive preoccupation of having a serious illness in medicine residents

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Introduction: Excessive preoccupation of having a serious illness (EPHSI) or illness anxiety disorder is frequently reported by doctors and medical students
Objectives: Our objectives were to estimate the frequency of EPHSI in a population of medicine residents in Tunisia and to determine the factors associated with this pathology.
Methods: This was a cross-sectional study via internet, carried out among 404 medicine residents practicing in Tunisia during the period of November and December 2020 and January 2021.
The information was collected using a pre-designed questionnaire, edited using the Google site and disseminated via social networks. This questionnaire was inspired by the Health Anxiety Questionnaire, the MSD score, and the DSM-5 criteria for illness anxiety disorder
Results: In the end of the study period, 404 medicine residents responded to the questionnaire. The mean age was 27.4 years, the sex ratio was 0.47. Residents who fulfilled the DSM5 criteria of anxiety illness disorder represented 33.7% of the total group.
The most preoccupying diseases were neoplastic diseases (40.8%), neurodegenerative disorders (14.3%), and psychiatric disorders (10%).
EPHSI was associated to several sociodemographic, anamnestic and psychological factors
Conclusions: The establishment of psychological support systems for students, emphasizing coping and stress management techniques, should be implemented to prevent the EPHSI.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

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Anxiety and its effect on foreign medical students

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Introduction: Nowadays thousands of students choose to get into medical universities in foreign countries for a plethora of reasons. Tunisia represents one of these destinations, thanks to its geographic localization, weather, biological diversity as well as its ethnical and cultural background.
Objectives: To determine the effect of anxiety and psychological distress on the motivation of studies in foreign students in Tunisia.
Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional, descriptive and analytical study, carried out between July and September 2023 among foreign students at the Sfax Faculty of Medicine. Data collection was carried out using an anonymous self-questionnaire via "Google Forms shared via social media. Psychological distress was assessed using the "DASS-21" Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale. Motivation was assessed using the French version of the "SMMS-R-FR" Study Motivational Strength Questionnaire.
Results: Seventy-two foreign medical students completed the survey. The average age was 25 ± 3.45 years. The majority of students were male (57%). Coffee and tobacco were the most consumed substance by the students (88.9%, and 47.2% respectively). The mean score for score anxiety score was 6.59, 7.2 for depression and 7.83 for stress. The mean score for the strength of motivation was 42.4. We found a negative statistical association between the anxiety dimension and the strength of motivation (p=0.011, r= -0.29). We found no statistical association with the depressive symptoms dimension nor with the stress dimension.Smoking was correlated with anxiety and depression in our foreign students (p=0.02 and p=0.027 respectively).
Conclusions: Identifying psychological distress and screening for them can help prevent the deterioration of mental health of foreign students and therefore the deterioration their academic performance.

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Examining the Relationship Between Cyberchondria and Health Anxiety in Clinical Medical Students

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Introduction: Cyberchondria refers to the phenomenon where individuals experience increased health anxiety due to excessive health-related information-seeking on the internet. This behavior can lead to increased worry, symptom misinterpretation, and the belief that one may be suffering from a serious illness. While internet health-seeking is common, it can become maladaptive and contribute to clinically significant anxiety.
Objectives: The aim of this study was to investigate the prevalence and severity of cyberchondria among medical students, and to explore the relationship between online health-seeking behaviors and health anxiety.
Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted among clinical medical students using the **Cyberchondria Severity Scale (CSS)** and the **Short Health Anxiety Inventory (HAI-18).** The CSS is a 12-item self-report questionnaire that assesses the frequency of online health searches, the distress caused by those searches, and the misinterpretation of symptoms. The HAI-18 evaluates the frequency and intensity of health-related worries and behaviors over the past six months. Participants were asked to report their online health-searching habits, emotional responses, and overall health anxiety levels.
Results: A total of 169 clinical students participated in the study, with a predominance of females (74%). The mean age of participants was 23 ± 1.5 years. Regarding family medical history, 62.1% of participants reported a familial history of medical conditions, while 26% had a familial history of psychiatric disorders. Additionally, 39.6% of participants reported that their family members had been hospitalized for a serious illness. A personal medical history was