EPV0011

From wernicke-korsakoff to central pontine myelinolysis: the potentially irreversible risks of alcohol use

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Introduction: Sustained alcohol intake, when combined with incomplete treatment, can result in chronic structural changes in the Central Nervous System, including generalized cortical and cerebellar atrophy, amnesic syndromes like Korsakoff's syndrome, and white matter disorders such as Central Pontine Myelinolysis and Marchiafava-Bignami syndrome. It is crucial to prevent these complications due to their potential for irreversible and debilitating consequences. For Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome, early recognition and thiamine administration for prevention are paramount, as it arises from thiamine deficiency due to malnutrition caused by persistent alcohol use. In the case of Central Pontine Myelinolysis, which is caused by abrupt fluctuations in serum osmolality, controlled sodium correction is essential.
Objectives: Through a clinical case and a review of published literature, this study aims to reflect on the importance of preventing neurological injuries associated with chronic alcohol consumption, specifically Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome and Central Pontine Myelinolysis.
Methods: A literature review was conducted by searching for articles on PubMed using the terms "Alcohol Use Disorder," "Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome," and "Central pontine myelinolysis." A clinical case is presented, featuring a 50-year-old patient with alcohol use disorder who developed Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome and Central Pontine Myelinolysis. Considering this case, we reflect on the primary approaches that could have been beneficial in preventing these complications and propose a straightforward method for doing so.
Results: A 50-year-old patient presented with poor general condition, characterized by low weight, significant loss of strength in the limbs and arms, and incoherent speech with anterograde amnesia and confabulation. This condition had progressed to a point where the patient could no longer walk, perform basic self-care tasks such as bathing, dressing, and eating independently, underscoring the severity of his condition. The diagnoses of Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome and Central Pontine Myelinolysis were established based on clinical manifestations and the presence of hyperintense lesions observed in the central pons on T2/FLAIR axial MRI scans. This clinical case highlights the importance of proper and precocious prevention of complications in patients with alcohol use disorder. The foremost step in preventing these complications is to treat alcohol dependence effectively, even when faced with patient resistance. It's vital to remain vigilant about potential complications and implement suitable prophylactic measures.
Conclusions: The devastating effects of complications arising from Alcohol Use Disorder, such as Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome and Central Pontine Myelinolysis, underscore the importance of enhanced attention that clinicians should provide when approaching these patients at all clinical interactions.

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EPV0013

Different facets of addiction from a systemic perspective: a case report

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Introduction: Many individuals who suffer from one or multiple substance use disorders often also struggle with another co-morbid psychiatric condition, primarily anxiety disorders. As substance dependency develops, the loss of self-control becomes a pivotal issue, leading to challenges in self-esteem and self-respect. These challenges subsequently give rise to problems in interpersonal communication and close relationships. In addition to the biological model of substance use problems and highly manualized approaches, it is crucial to have a systemic understanding of the patient's situation and appropriate treatment settings. This understanding allows for the proper consideration of individual differences and requirements, ultimately enabling better treatment and prevention strategies.
Objectives: Our aim is to present a comprehensive case that shows various facets of addiction and introduce a systemic therapy concept of an integrative/systemic day clinic from Germany.
Methods: Through a detailed case presentation, we will introduce a systemic-psychotherapeutic day-clinic concept from a psychiatric training hospital in Wunstorf, Germany.
Results: Case: In the case of a 48-year-old female patient initially diagnosed with recurrent depressive disorder, it was later revealed that she also deals with alcohol addiction and its interconnectedness with sex addiction. Shame and a lack of self-esteem in relationships played a central role in her journey. She does not perceive herself to be loved but to be harmed, which led to many violent sexual acts that increased her feelings of shame. Systemic therapeutic approaches like family constellations were applied, helping her to experience her child-ego states. This profound insight propelled her willingness to change. She began prioritizing self-care, learning to like, accept, and eventually love herself. Aromatherapy aided in calming and maintaining focus. The patient learned to redefine her emotions, aligning them with reality, thereby enabling the adaptive fulfillment of her needs.
Conclusions: Our interdisciplinary team at the day clinic employs therapeutic approaches like dynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and systemic therapy to thoroughly understand the patients and their conditions. This case underscores the significance of an individually tailored treatment drawing from diverse therapeutic concepts, especially in patients with addiction. The combination of different therapeutic approaches facilitates a profound engagement with the patient, potentially resulting in more intensive therapeutic work and a higher rate of success which should be evaluated in future studies.

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