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COGNITIVE DEFICITS RELATED TO ALCOHOL ABUSE: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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Objective: Cognitive deficits may compromise patients' utilization of rehabilitative information. There is an increasing attention on the opportunity to integrate a specific support to cognitive functions in alcohol detox programme and the first step to program the clinical intervention is to have a complete overview of cognitive deficits in alcoholics clinical sample.
Methods: 62 patients who refer to alcoholism service were screened at admission time. Cognitive functions were assessed by trained psychologist with a specific neuropsychological battery. The impact of clinical features as age, gender, scholarship and concurrent polyabuse was evaluated for each function.
Results: The 45,7% of our sample shows a generalized decline. Subtests shows impairment's different degrees (26,1 % verbal memory; 32,6 % working memory; 50,0 % psychomotor speed and coordination; 30,4 % verbal fluency; 58,7 % selective attention; 13,0 % tower of London task; 41,3 % executive functions; 56,5% sustained attention). Clinical features have different impact on cognitive functions.
Conclusion: Alcoholics patients shows a diffuse range of cognitive impairment. For this reasons a cognitive remediation programme could be a useful adjunctive intervention for the treatment of alcohol dependence.

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