

COPING STRATEGIES FOR PATIENTS WITH ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE WHO ARE IN REMISSION OR NOT: A CONTROLLED STUDY

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Introduction: High relapse rate and extreme difficulty to maintain abstinence are main characteristics of alcohol dependence. In the course of the this psychiatric disorder some patients with alcohol dependence remit while others not.

Objective: Coping styles may differ the patients with non remitted alcohol dependence from remitted alcoholics and healthy controls.

Aims: We aimed to find out the coping mechanisms which made the difference between remitted and non remitted alcoholics compared to age and sex matched healthy controls

Methods: Ninety patients with alcohol dependency were enrolled in the study. Fifty-three patients with alcohol dependence were abstinent for more than one year which formed the remission group, and thirty-seven of them were either in in-patient treatment or either not fully remitted, that is having remission less than one year. Coping styles of these two subgroups of patients with alcohol dependence were compared with forty non-psychiatric healthy, age and sex matched subjects.

Results: Patients with alcohol dependence had higher non adaptive coping strategies compared to controls. Non-remitted patients with alcohol dependence used more non-adaptive coping strategies compared to both remitted patients with alcohol dependence and healthy controls.

Conclusions: These results in part support higher probability of non-adaptive coping strategies in patients with alcohol dependence particularly in those with not remitted alcohol dependence compared to both abstinent alcoholics and healthy controls.