

Comorbid ADHD in bipolar: preliminary study in an Italian sample

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While the importance of the comorbidity between ADHD during childhood and Bipolar disorders in adult is reaching growing interest its effective prevalence remain controversial and have been reported in a range between 9% and 94%. This variability could be related to several biased factors such as length of time of recall, clinical features overlaps, instruments lack of specificity, and the potential impact of treatments in these patients. Taking in account all these aspects we present the first European study that analyses clinical characteristics of untreated bipolar patients with and without ADHD comorbidities. We considered 50 young patients with DSM-IV diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder (BD) type I or II in the period January 2001-December 2002. According to the Wender Utah Rating Scale (WURS), nine patients (18%) had lifetime ADHD diagnosis. Four of bipolar patients had a childhood ADHD diagnosis. None of ADHD+ patients were under pharmacological treatment in the childhood. Bipolar patients with ADHD showed a mean lower educational level. ADHD comorbidity in BD appears relevantly related to more severity and is to be considered in the screening of cognitive disorders in BD. Prospective studies on this topic are warranted.

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