Maternal psychiatric history Is associated with the symptom severity of ADHD in offspring


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Abstract
Controversy exists about the role of parent psychopathology in persistence and severity of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms in their children. Here we aimed to analyse the potential association between the severity of ADHD symptoms in children and the presence of psychiatric and ADHD symptoms in their biological parents. Seventy-three triads of children and their parents who were in active treatment for their diagnosed ADHD were evaluated in our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centers. The mental health of the parents was also assessed. The general psychopathology of the parents was evaluated using the Symptom Checklist-90-R (SCL-90-R), and symptoms of hyperactivity were examined using the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale (ASRSv.1.1). The severity of symptoms in children was assessed using the ADHD Rating Scale-IV (ADHD-RS-IV). Variables that could have affected the clinical development of ADHD such as sex, evolution time, age, academic level and the presence of comorbidities were controlled. The severity of the symptoms in children with ADHD was significantly related to the psychiatric history of their mother, the younger age of the child and the presence of a comorbid conduct disorder in the child. We discussed the importance of screening for parental psychopathology in clinical practice.