

Demographic and Clinical Predictors of Hospitalization in Preschoolers With ADHD.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE:

This chart review study characterized demographic and clinical indicators of the need for hospitalization in preschoolers with ADHD.

METHOD:

Medical records of preschoolers with Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th ed., text rev.; DSM-IV-TR) ADHD during 2009-2012 were systematically reviewed. The cohort included 111 children (aged 5.13 ± 0.55 years, 77.47% boys). The demographic and clinical variables of hospitalized at a day-care unit ($n = 30$) and nonhospitalized ($n = 81$) preschoolers were compared.

RESULTS:

Hospitalized preschoolers were younger ($p < .0001$), had higher rates of unmarried mothers ($p < .001$), and a higher number of comorbidities. The number of inattentive/hyperactivity-impulsivity symptoms was similar in both groups. Neurodevelopmental comorbidity ($p < .0001$), but not externalized ($p = .82$) or internalized ($p = .20$) psychopathology, was significantly higher in the hospitalized group.

CONCLUSION:

ADHD severity in preschoolers tends to be associated with younger age, specific parenthood constellations, and a high rate of neurodevelopmental, but not other, comorbidities. These findings emphasize the importance of the neurodevelopmental context in planning ADHD interventions at preschool age.