Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder beyond adolescence. Time to think different?

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Abstract

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by a pattern of severe inattention-disorganization and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity beyond what is expected for individuals with a comparable development level. These behaviors impair daily life activities of patients in more than one environment and impact their performance and abilities compared with their peers. Extensive reviews have been published about the psychiatric comorbidities associated with ADHD but little attention has been given to the overall impact of ADHD on health. This study reviews some of the most common problems in medical care associated with ADHD like smoking, substance use, accident risk, sleep disorders, obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and early mortality. Today, a close follow-up of patient with ADHD is necessary not only from the psychiatric perspective but also in regard to general medicine issues to prevent the impact on health of those medical co-morbidities. Such conditions can end in severe chronic diseases with consequences and high cost for the individuals, the families and the society far beyond the academic and emotional impact frequently described as associated to ADHD. This condition has serious repercussions on health which need a medical multidisciplinary approach.