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The main risk factors, depending depression, in elderly residents of nursing homes of Tehran, Iran

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Background: Depression is a common health problem in elderly nursing home (NH), known to be multi factorial disorder. Although depression is prevalent among older adults, yet the illness often goes unrecognized and untreated, and yet, the influence of common preventable factors is to be discovered. Depression has significant effects on quality of life, and it's a known risk factor for suicide. There is abundant evidence that depression in older adults is treatable, perhaps in as high as 65% to 75% of cases. Our study was designed to evaluate the prevalence of depression and some possible risk factors in elderly residents of nursing homes in Iran.

Methods: Data on demographic characteristics, nutritional and health status of 244 residents aged 60 years or older were collected from seventeen nursing homes in Tehran, Iran, during 2010 to 2012. Depression was assessed and classified according to the 15-item GDS. Univariate and then multivariate complex sample survey ordinal regression analysis was performed to investigate the association between depression and the risk factors.

Results: The average age of the 244 cases studied was 75.8 ($\pm$8.7) years, 53.3% were female (of whom 74.2% were housewives), and 43.4% illiterate, 32.0% were divorced or were living separately. The percentages of non-depressed, mild, moderate and severe depression were 9.8%, 50.0%, 29.5% and 10.7%, respectively. Multivariate analysis showed that dissatisfaction with personnel of nursing homes and food quality had odds ratios of 2.91 (1.33–6.36) and 2.64 (1.44–4.87), corresponding to greater odds of having a higher grade depression. Moreover, those who rested or walked had significantly higher risk of a more severe depression in comparison with those who did not (OR of 2.25 (1.50–3.38) and 1.98 (1.24–3.18), respectively), however, studying had a protective odds ratio of 0.17 (0.13–0.22).

Conclusion: Depression was very common in our sample and their lifestyle influenced its prevalence.

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