

# 13<sup>th</sup> World congress on Addictive Disorders & Addiction Therapy

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## Psychiatric manifestations in HIV patients

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Persons living with HIV/AIDS have many challenges including successfully adhering to treatment recommendations in order to maintain optimal health, negotiating disclosure of HIV status and coping with potential stigma. These are significant challenges; yet, for HIV-infected persons who also have mental health difficulties, these and other, challenges can be amplified. As such, the co-occurrence of HIV and mental illness poses a significant public health problem and represents a difficult challenge for those who treat and care for these persons. Depression and anxiety disorders are common among people living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus than the non-infected individuals. The co-existence of these disorders are associated with barriers to treatment and worsening medical outcomes, including treatment resistance, increased risk for suicide, greater chance for recurrence and utilization of medical resources and/or increase morbidity and mortality. Therefore, assessing depression and anxiety among HIV patients has a crucial role for further interventions. This is a cross-sectional study was conducted at at Infectious Disease Service, University Hospital Center of Tirana during 2019 including 105 patients. Data were collected using a pretested, structured and standardized questionnaire. Systematic sampling technique was used to select the study participants. The prevalence of co-morbid depression and anxiety among HIV patients was 21% and prevalence of depression and anxiety among HIV patients was 32% and 28% respectively. Multivariate analysis showed that individual who had perceived HIV stigma ( $p<0.01$ ), poor social support ( $p=0.02$ ), HIV stage III ( $p<0.01$ ) and poor medication adherence ( $p<0.01$ ) were significantly associated with depression. Being female ( $p=0.03$ ), being divorced ( $p<0.01$ ), having co morbid TB ( $p<0.01$ ) and perceived HIV stigma ( $p<0.02$ ) were also significantly associated with anxiety. Prevalence of depression and anxiety was high. Having perceived HIV stigma, HIV Stage III, poor social support and poor medication adherence were associated with depression. Whereas being female, being divorced and having co morbid TB and perceived HIV stigma were associated with anxiety. Individuals in HIV care should be screened and treated for depression and anxiety in integration mental health services.

**Importance of research:** As the life expectancy of people living with HIV infection has increased (through recent advances in antiretroviral therapy), clinicians have been more likely to encounter neuropsychiatric manifestations of the disease. Most patients with serious, progressive illness confront a range of psychological challenges, including the prospect of real and anticipated losses, worsening quality of life, the fear of physical decline and death, and coping with uncertainty. HIV infection brings additional challenges due to the rapidly changing treatment developments and outlook. Some patients present with cognitive deficits due to an HIV-triggered neurotoxic cascade in the central nervous system. However, more patients present with a depressive spectrum disorder during the course of their illness, the underlying pathogenesis of which is not as well understood. This category of psychiatric disorders presents diagnostic challenges because of the many

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neurovegetative confounding factors that are present in association with HIV illness. As quality of life becomes a more central consideration in the management of this chronic illness, better awareness of these neuropsychiatric manifestations is paramount.

## Biography

Sadik Aliko is an infectious diseases specialist from Tirana, Albania. He graduated on 1992 from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Tirana, Albania. In 2002 he commenced the four year residency in infectious diseases and work at the Service of Infectious Diseases at the University Hospital centre "Mother Teresa" in Tirana.

Currently he is doing Phd in infectious diseases from Tirana University, in Tirana - Albania. His research focuses on the neurocognitive and daily functioning abilities, particularly medication adherence of persons with HIV infection and co-occurring mental illness.

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