

Epidemiology of Psychiatric Disorders

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Abstract. This article presents the epidemiology of mental disorder of several diseases such as anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, destructive behavior and dissocial disorders and disorders of the nervous system development. The number of these diseases is shown.

Key words: schizophrenia, mental disorder, depression, nervous system

A mental disorder is characterized by a clinically significant impairment of cognitive functions, emotional regulation or human behavior. This is usually associated with distress or disorders in important areas of functioning. There are many different types of mental disorders. Mental disorders can also be referred to as mental health conditions. The latter is a broader term covering mental disorders, psychosocial disorders and (other) mental conditions associated with significant distress, impaired functioning or risk of self-harm. In 2019, 1 out of every 8 people, or 970 million people worldwide, suffered from a mental disorder, with anxiety and depressive disorders being the most common [1]. In 2020, the number of people living with anxiety and depressive disorders has increased significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Initial estimates show an increase in anxiety and major depressive disorders by 26% and 28%, respectively, in just one year [2]. Despite the existence of effective prevention and treatment options, most people with mental disorders do not have access to effective medical care. Many people also face stigmatization, discrimination and human rights violations.

Anxiety disorders

In 2019, 301 million people suffered from an anxiety disorder, including 58 million children and adolescents [1]. Anxiety disorders are characterized by excessive fear and anxiety and related behavioral disorders. The symptoms are severe enough to lead to significant distress or significant dysfunction. There are several different types of anxiety disorders, such as: generalized anxiety disorder (characterized by excessive anxiety), panic disorder (characterized by panic attacks), social anxiety disorder (characterized by excessive fear and anxiety in social situations), separation anxiety disorder (characterized by excessive fear or anxiety about separation from those with whom a person has a deep emotional connection) and others. There is an effective psychological treatment, and depending on the age and severity of the disease, medication may also be considered.

Depression

In 2019, 280 million people were living with depression, including 23 million children and adolescents [1]. Depression is different from the usual mood swings and short-term emotional reactions to challenges in everyday life. During a depressive episode, a person experiences a depressed mood (feelings of sadness, irritability, emptiness) or loss of pleasure or interest in activities most of the day, almost every day, for at least two weeks. There are also several other symptoms that may include poor concentration, feelings of excessive guilt or low self-esteem, hopelessness about the future, thoughts of death or suicide, sleep disturbances, changes in appetite or weight, as well as a feeling of special fatigue or lack of energy. People with depression are at increased risk of suicide. Nevertheless, effective psychological treatment exists, and depending on the age and severity of the disease, medication may also be considered.

Bipolar disorder

In 2019, 40 million people suffered from bipolar disorder [1]. People with bipolar disorder experience alternating depressive episodes with periods of manic symptoms. During a depressive episode, a person experiences a depressed mood (feelings of sadness, irritability, emptiness) or loss of pleasure or interest in activities for most of the day, almost every day. Manic symptoms may include euphoria or irritability, increased activity or energy, as well as other symptoms such as increased talkativeness, jumping

thoughts, increased self-esteem, decreased need for sleep, distractibility and impulsive reckless behavior. People with bipolar disorder are at increased risk of suicide. However, there are effective treatment options, including psychoeducation, stress reduction and strengthening of social functioning, as well as medication.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

The prevalence of PTSD and other mental disorders is high in conflict conditions [3]. PTSD can develop after exposure to an extremely threatening or terrible event, or a series of events. It is characterized by all of the following: 1) re-experiencing a traumatic event or events in the present (obsessive memories, flashbacks or nightmares); 2) avoiding thoughts and memories of the event (events) or avoiding actions, situations or people recalling this event; and 3) persistent perception of an increased current threat. These symptoms persist for at least several weeks and cause significant disruption in functioning. There is an effective psychological treatment.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia affects approximately 24 million people, or 1 in 300 people worldwide [1]. The life expectancy of people with schizophrenia is 10-20 years lower than that of the general population [4]. Schizophrenia is characterized by significant perceptual disturbances and changes in behavior. Symptoms may include persistent delusions, hallucinations, disorganized thinking, extremely disorganized behavior, or extreme arousal. People with schizophrenia may experience constant difficulties with their cognitive functioning. However, there are a number of effective treatment options, including medication, psychoeducation, family interventions, and psychosocial rehabilitation.

Eating disorders

In 2019, 14 million people suffered from eating disorders, including almost 3 million children and adolescents [1]. Eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa are associated with poor nutrition and excessive preoccupation with food, as well as noticeable problems with body weight and figure. Symptoms or behaviors result in significant risk or harm to health, significant distress, or significant impairment of functioning. Anorexia nervosa often occurs in adolescence or early adulthood and is associated with premature death due to medical complications or suicide. People with bulimia nervosa are at significantly increased risk of substance use, suicidality and health complications. There are effective treatment options, including family therapy and cognitive therapy.

Destructive behavior and dissocial disorders

In 2019, 40 million people, including children and adolescents, suffered from a dissocial behavior disorder [1]. This disorder, also known as behavior disorder, is one of two disorders of destructive behavior and dissocial disorders, the other is oppositional defiant disorder. Destructive behavior and dissocial disorders are characterized by persistent behavior problems, such as constant disobedience or disobedience to behavior that constantly violates the fundamental rights of others or basic age-appropriate social norms, rules or laws. The onset of destructive and dissocial disorders usually, although not always, occurs in childhood. There are effective psychological treatments, often involving parents, guardians and teachers, solving cognitive problems or teaching social skills.

Disorders of the development of the nervous system

Disorders of the development of the nervous system are behavioral and cognitive disorders that occur during development and are associated with significant difficulties in acquiring and performing certain intellectual, motor, linguistic or social functions.

Disorders of the nervous system development include intellectual development disorders, autism spectrum disorders and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) among others. ADHD is characterized by constant inattention and/or hyperactivity - impulsivity, which has a direct negative impact on academic, professional or social functioning. Intellectual development disorders are characterized by significant limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, which refers to difficulties with everyday conceptual, social and practical skills that are performed in everyday life. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a diverse group of conditions characterized by some degree of difficulties in social communication and mutual social interaction, as well as constant limited, repetitive and inflexible patterns of behavior, interests or activities.

There are effective treatment options, including psychosocial interventions, behavioral interventions, professional and speech therapy. For certain diagnoses and age groups, medication may also be considered.

Who is at risk of developing a mental disorder?

At any moment, a variety of individual, family, social, and structural factors can combine to protect or undermine mental health. Although most people are resilient, people who are exposed to adverse circumstances, including poverty, violence, disability and inequality, are at higher risk. Protective factors and risk factors include individual psychological and biological factors, such as emotional skills, as well as genetics. Many risk factors and protective factors are influenced by changes in the structure and/or functions of the brain.

Health systems and social support

Health systems are not yet responding adequately to the needs of people with mental disorders and are experiencing a significant shortage of resources. The gap between the need for treatment and its provision is large all over the world; and it often turns out to be of poor quality in the provision. For example, only 29% of people with psychosis [5] and only one third of people with depression receive official psychiatric care [6].

Preclinical study of new psychotropic substances

Recently, much attention has been paid to the study of new psychotropic drugs. The search for a new safe and effective means remains relevant. For this purpose, a preclinical study of an atypical neuroleptic agent [7-8] was studied for the use of schizophrenia, nervous system disease [9-12], in a depressive state [13], psychostimulants [14,15] and anticonvulsants [16]. The last decade has seen unprecedented promotion of new antipsychotic drugs. Just like their predecessors – neuroleptics – atypical antipsychotics effectively eliminate delusional disorders, hallucinations, disorganization of thinking and other clinical manifestations of psychoses. Compared with previous generations of drugs, atypical antipsychotics are less able to cause extrapyramidal symptoms and have greater clinical efficacy [17-20]. The world continues to study new herbal and synthetic psychotropic drugs.

People with mental disorders also need social support, including support in the development and maintenance of personal, family and social relationships. People with mental disorders may also need support for educational programs, employment, housing, and participation in other significant activities.

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