Introduction and Objectives

- Epilepsy is often associated with comorbid psychiatric illnesses and the most frequent of these, in around 40% of patients, is major depressive disorder.
- Compared to general population epidemiological studies, there is a consistent increased prevalence of depression in epilepsy.
- The main aim of this study was to evaluate the relationship between epilepsy, antiepileptic drugs (AEDs) and depression.
- We also wanted to evaluate possible association between depressive symptoms in patients with epilepsy with the quality of life (QoL).

Material & Methods

- This was a prospective cross-sectional study that was carried out at the tertiary teaching hospital (University Hospital Centre Zagreb, Croatia, Referral Centre of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Croatia for Epilepsy) with Ethics committee approval.
- Depressive symptoms were evaluated using the Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (HAM-D17).
- Quality of life was assessed using the Quality of Life in Epilepsy-31 inventory (QOLIE-31).

Results

- 108 patients (63% females, 37% males; mean age 39.54 ± 15.91 years, range 18-80 years) with epilepsy were included.
- 14.8% of patients had focal, 35.2% generalised and 40.7% both types of epilepsy.
- Majority of patients (65.74%) were on two or more AEDs and quarter was on monotherapy (25%); 19% of patients were on older, 42% on newer and 39% on both AEDs.
- Mean total score on HAM-D17 was 9.94 ± 8.18 (0-33, men - mean total score 10.16 ± 8.85, women - mean total score 9.81 ± 7.84).
- There were no significant differences on HAM-D17 regarding gender and age.
- We didn’t find statistically significant differences regarding AEDs (older vs. newer AEDs, or both types AEDs) and results on HAM-D17, nor between the type of epilepsy and results on HAM-D17.
- We found strong negative correlation between the higher QoL and HAM-D17 (p=0.000).

Conclusion

- Results of this study evaluating depressive symptoms in patients with epilepsy demonstrate that our patients mainly experience mild depressive symptoms, with no significant differences on HAM-D17 regarding gender and age.
- Patients with epilepsy with less pronounced depressive symptoms were found to have higher QoL.
- We did not find statistically significant differences regarding the type of epilepsy and results on HAM-D17, nor between the AEDs (older vs. newer AEDs, or both types AEDs) and results on HAM-D17.

References: