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Life Events and Psychoeducation in Patients with Systemic Sclerosis

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of psychological/psychoeducational assessment in patients with systemic sclerosis (SSc). **Methods:** A diagnostic interview was undertaken in order to investigate any temporal connection between an adverse life event and the first appearance of SSc. Following this, the rheumatologist's assessment of subsequent changes in the SSc were noted. The psychoeducation we did, as an adjunct to conventional thoracic duct lymphatic drainage therapy (TDD), started in Dec. 2002, and the primary end point was an improvement in clinical outcome at 1 month after entry. **Results:** The patients with SSc in the study showed higher percentages of lower education (69.2%) and working class (63.5%), and reported that the most common life event in adults was divorce or separation from spouse, while in adolescent was difficult home conditions. A favourable response was noted in all patients who participated in the study; Remission was achieved in 35, while 17 showed some improvement. **Conclusions:** We conclude that life events were causally related to the onset of SSc and psychoeducation combined with conventional TDD led to a remission in the majority of patients.

KEYWORDS

Psychosomatic Medicine, Systemic Sclerosis (SSc), Life Events, Psychoeducation

Cite this paper

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