

Biography

Dr. Shirin El-Makawi, associate professor of psychiatry, Cairo University, Egypt. Fulfilled Master's degree in neuropsychiatry in 2006 and Medical Doctorate (M.D.) in psychiatry 2012 in Cairo University. Licensed dialectal behaviour therapist from Linehan Institute, Washington, for the treatment of borderline personality disorders. Assistant manager of the outpatient psychiatry clinic of the Psychiatry and Addiction Hospital, Cairo University. Head of the editorial coordinators of the International Journal of Contemporary Psychiatry Journal, Cairo University. During my career in the psychiatry department of Cairo University, I have been working in the Addiction Unit for several years; leading a day care service for schizophrenia patients; currently leading the Gender Dysphoria Clinic and pioneering a supportive group for patients with Gender Dysphoria in Egypt; providing individual and group psychotherapy; teaching under- and postgraduates, giving and attending courses locally and internationally, publishing many researches in the field of neuropsychiatry locally and internationally.

Serum Oxytocin Level among Male Patients with Opioid Dependence and its Relation to Craving

Abstract

Introduction: Oxytocin, a known hormone and neurotransmitter, has been lately known to be involved in the drug addiction cycle especially during developing tolerance, in relation to craving and during withdrawal.

Objectives: The aim was to assess serum oxytocin level in patients with active opiate dependency in comparison to abstinent patients and healthy controls and its relation with craving among patients and abstinent patients.

Methods: A consecutive sample of 30 opiate dependent patients who fully meet the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) criteria for opiate dependence, in addition to 30 patients fulfilling DSM-5 criteria of opiate dependence with at least 6 months of abstinence were assessed regarding serum oxytocin levels, craving levels using immunoassay kit and brief substance craving scale, respectively. They were compared to each other and to a sample of 30 healthy controls matching both groups.

Results: There was a statistically significant difference between the patient's group and the control group in serum oxytocin levels ($p < 0.05$) but not between the other two groups i.e. patient versus abstinent and abstinent versus controls. Craving levels

showed a statistically significant difference between the patient's group and the abstinent group ($p < 0.001$). A negative correlation was found between oxytocin level and craving in the abstinent group ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: The interaction between serum oxytocin levels and craving should be considered when dealing with opiate dependent patients as they affect and are affected by opiate dependence. Further studies regarding how to implement this during patient's treatment should be considered.

Keywords: Oxytocin, addiction, opiate dependence, craving

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