MILD PARKINSONIAN SIGNS AND RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME IN THE ELDERLY KOREAN

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Background: Although restless legs syndrome (RLS) commonly accompanies Parkinson's disease (PD), the relationship between mild parkinsonian signs (MPS) and RLS was not well known. We investigated the prevalence and correlates of RLS and MPS in the elderly Koreans.

Methods: As a community-based epidemiological study, a simple random sample of 601 was drawn from a roster of 36,735 elderly aged 60 years and older. The diagnosis of RLS was established in face-to-face interviews using the four minimal diagnostic criteria for RLS recommended by National Institute of Health. MPS was rated with an abbreviated Unified Parkinson’s Disease Rating Scale, resulting in a parkinsonian sign score. Analyses were cross-sectional.

Results: Mean age was 72.5 years. MPS was present in 100 (16.6%). A total of 30 subjects (22 women and 8 men) were diagnosed as RLS with a prevalence of 5.0%. The odds for presence of RLS was significant in the subject with MPS (odds ratio [OR] 2.26, 95%CI = 1.01 to 5.09).

Conclusion: The prevalence of RLS in the Korean elderly population was lower than the Caucasian population. The present results support the correlates between RLS and MPS like those of RLS and PD.