DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS IN PATIENTS WITH ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN PATIENT’S AND CAREGIVER’S REPORT


Department of Physical Education, UNESP – Univ. Estadual Paulista, Rio Claro, Brazil

Introduction: Mood changes and depressive symptoms are common in Alzheimer’s disease (AD). The patient’s perception of these symptoms may be poor, so it is important to know the perception of the caregiver towards the patient.

Objective: Describe and compare the reports of patients and caregivers regarding their depressive symptoms.

Methods: Twenty nine patients with clinical diagnosis of AD and their respective caregivers were enrolled in this study. Age, education and global cognitive state (Mini Mental State Examination - MMSE) of the patient and caregiver’s age were collected. Depressive symptoms were assessed by means of the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15), it was applied in both, patient and caregiver, who reported his perception about the patient.

Results and conclusion: Descriptive analysis showed that patients presented as median (range) age 81 years old (68-91), educational level of 4 years (0-11), MMSE 17 points (7-24), 2 points in GDS (0-9). The caregivers were 53 years old (23-87), and 3 points in the GDS (0-14). Significant difference (p = 0.01) was found when patients and caregivers reports were compared, using U- Mann Whitney test. The results showed that caregivers overestimate patient’s depressive symptoms. It demonstrates that it is appropriate to consider the caregiver’s perception, in order to help patient’s treatment.