

Cardiovascular diseases among patients with schizophrenia

Abstract

The presence of comorbid physical illnesses especially, cardiovascular diseases (CVD) in schizophrenia is a growing area of concern in recent years. In order to reduce disease burden, to improve quality of life and to provide holistic care, it is important to know about the relationship between schizophrenia and CVD. The objective of this review is to explore the extent of CVD problems, relevant risk factors and potential measures for early diagnosis and prevention of CVD among patients with schizophrenia. Worldwide studies show that patients with schizophrenia have a higher mortality and lower life expectancy than the general population. CVD is the leading cause of increased mortality in schizophrenia. Common CVD risk factors in schizophrenia include metabolic syndrome, sedentary behaviour, tobacco smoking, effects of antipsychotics, long chain omega-3 fatty acid deficiency and shared genetics between CVD and schizophrenia. The potential methods for early detection and prevention of CVD in schizophrenia are also discussed. Though the patients with schizophrenia form a high risk group for CVD, consensus guidelines for early detection and prevention of CVD in schizophrenia are lacking. Comorbidity of CVD in schizophrenia needs more serious attention by clinicians and researchers.