

## 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on **Epilepsy & Treatment**

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### Depression and epilepsy

**Background:** Epilepsy is a chronic neurological disorders often complicated not only by recurrent seizures, but also from mood disorders. Nevertheless, mental health, including depression, is not routinely being assessed in patients diagnosed with epilepsy. Up to date, no former study has assessed the prevalence and severity of depression among epilepsy patients in Albania.

**Methods:** Twenty-nine (29) consecutive epilepsy outpatients were enrolled at the University Hospital Center “Mother Theresa” together with 47 healthy controls. To assess depression, both patients and controls were interviewed by trained neurologists using the Beck depression inventory II (BDI-II). Differences were tested using the independent samples t-test for total BDI-II scores, and chi-squared test for categorical levels of depression.

**Results:** Epilepsy patients (55.2% males, mean age 36.9 years old) showed no statistically significant gender or age difference with the healthy controls (55.3% males, mean age 42.1 years old). Nevertheless, epilepsy patients scored higher than controls on the BDI-II (mean score 16.4 versus 8.3,  $p < 0.001$ ). In epilepsy patients, prevalence of minimal, mild, moderate and severe depression were 48.3%, 20.7%, 20.7% and 10.3% respectively, showing a more severe distribution of depression levels (Pearson chi-square 8.914,  $p = 0.03$ ) compared to controls, which showed minimal, mild, moderate and severe depression in 80.8%, 8.5%, 6.4% and 4.3% of the cases respectively.

**Conclusions:** This study depicts, for the first time, the double burden of depression and epilepsy in Albanian patients, recognizing a higher prevalence and severity of depression in epilepsy. Therefore, in order for the need of mental health care to be met, a more careful and patient-oriented treatment strategy may be warranted.

### Biography

Jera Kruja is a member of Scientific Committee at European Academy of Neurology and Professor of Neurology at Mother Theresa University Hospital Center. Since 2014, she is European Representative at Teaching Course Committee, World Federation of Neurology. During 2013-2014, she was a Rector of University of Medicine, Tirana and Member of Editing Board of OA Publishing London, WebMed Central Brain Editor, Albanian Medical Journal, Bulletin of Medical Sciences, University of Medicine, Tirana. She worked at Health National Contact Point, European Commission, CORDIS Fp7 program (2010-2013). From 2003, she is a reviewer of European Journal of Neurology, Clinical Epidemiology, Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment, Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health and Journal of Pediatric Epilepsy. She is a trainer of European Academy of Epilepsy since February 2003. She was the President of Albanian Society of Neurology during 1998-2007.

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