

Chronic Disease and Depression- A Correlational Study

Introduction

- ◆ For seven weeks in Jan-Feb 2002 patients in a rural Illinois family practice clinic were surveyed to examine the possible correlation between chronic disease and self-reported depression

Study Method

- ◆ Non-pregnant, adult patients completed an anonymous questionnaire
- ◆ Questions included those from the Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI) and those regarding the patient's health history
- ◆ The BDI's reliability has been validated in a number of psychiatric studies
- ◆ The sample population was non-random and self-selected

Study Results

- ◆ Of the estimated 300 patients asked, 66 completed the survey
- ◆ 70% of respondents were female
- ◆ Average age of respondents was 46
- ◆ 16 of the 66 patients (24%) reported mild, moderate or severe depression
- ◆ Average number of chronic diseases of those reporting depression is 3.7

Correlations

- ◆ There was a strong, positive correlation (.72) between the severity of self-reported depression and the number of chronic diseases from which one suffered
- ◆ There was essentially no correlation (.02) between time spent with physician during visit and depression status

Correlations

- ◆ There was a moderate positive correlation (.45) between a worsening in patient health over past year and their depression status
- ◆ There was a moderate positive correlation (.40) between a physician discussing depression with the patient and their depression status

Study Results

Severe Depression

- ◆ 3% reported severe depression
- ◆ Not surprisingly, the average number of chronic diseases for those patients with severe depression is 6.
- ◆ 100% (of those with severe depression) had talked to their physician about depression in the last 6 months
- ◆ 100% had stated that their health had changed for the worse in the past year
- ◆ 100% either “agree” or “strongly agree” that their physician spends enough time with them

Study Results

Moderate Depression

- ◆ 9% reported moderate depression
- ◆ The average number of chronic diseases for those patients with moderate depression is 4.
- ◆ 50% (of those with moderate depression) had talked to their physician about depression in the last 6 months
- ◆ 50% had stated that their health had changed for the worse in the past year
- ◆ 66% either “agree” or “strongly agree” that their physician spends enough time with them

Study Results

Mild Depression

- ◆ 12% reported mild depression
- ◆ the average number of chronic diseases for those patients with mild depression is 3.
- ◆ Only 22% (of those with mild depression) had talked to their physician about depression in the last 6 months
- ◆ 38% had stated that their health had changed for the worse in the past year
- ◆ 63% either “agree” or “strongly agree” that their physician spends enough time with them

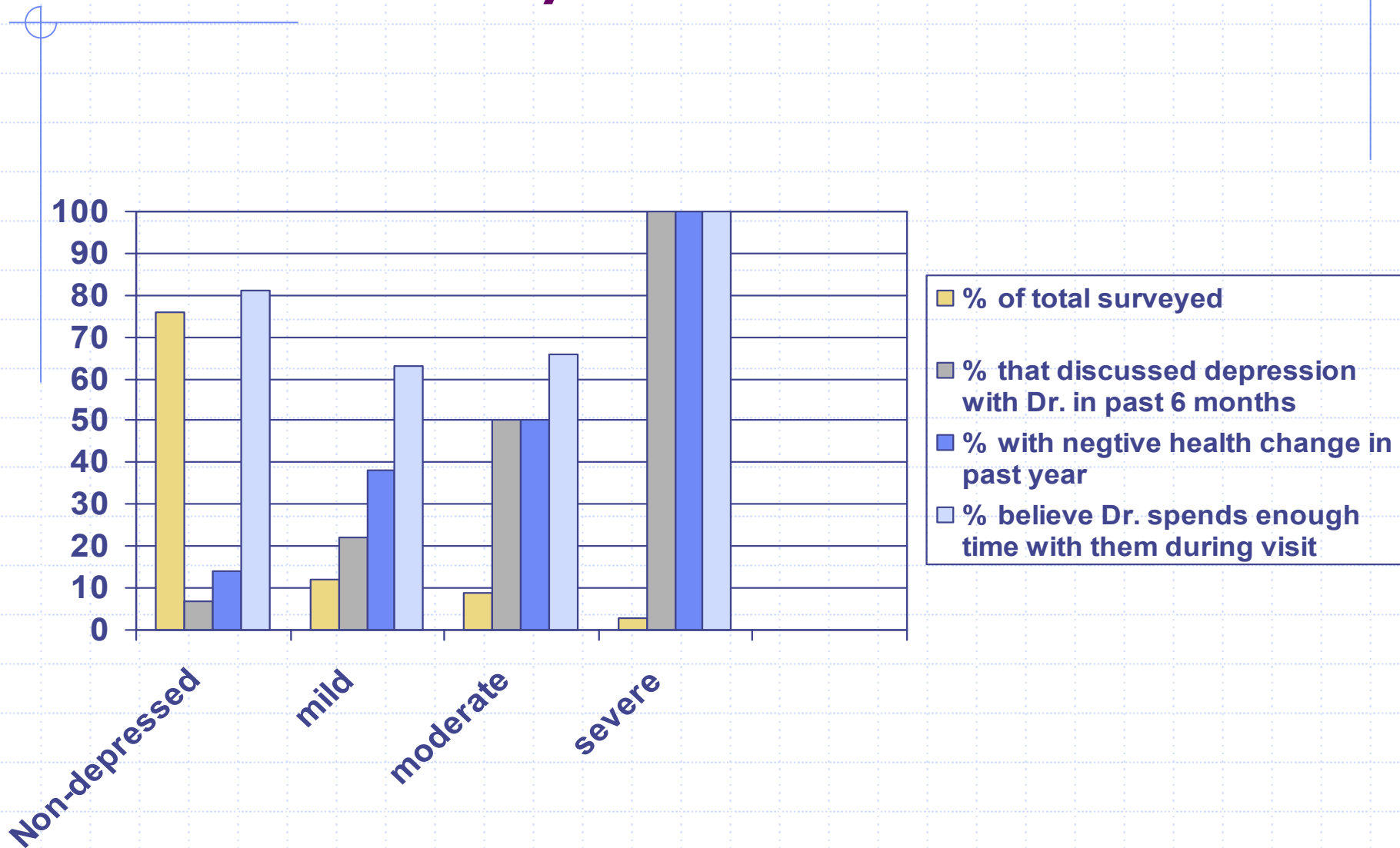
Non-Depressed Patients

- ◆ The average number of chronic diseases for those patients without depression is 1.
- ◆ 7% (of those without depression) had talked to their physician about depression in the last 6 months
- ◆ 14% had stated that their health had changed for the worse in the past year
- ◆ 81% either "agree" or "strongly agree" that their physician spends enough time with them

Depression Status and Chronic Disease

Patient status	Avg. # of chronic diseases
Non-depressed	1
Mildly depressed	3
Moderately depressed	4
Severely depressed	6

Other Survey Factors



Study Discussion

- ◆ One issue is that patients self-selected themselves for the survey, with perhaps those patients who were most depressed lacking the energy or interest to complete it
- ◆ If this was the case we would expect an even higher positive correlation between depression and chronic disease

Study Discussion

- ◆ Three patients who reported depression as a medical condition did not qualify as even mildly depressed according to the BDI
- ◆ This was a non-randomized, self-selecting survey and the results should be limited to similar populations

Conclusions

- ◆ There is a strong, positive correlation between chronic disease and depression
- ◆ There is a moderate positive correlation between a worsening in patient health over past year and their depression status

Conclusions

- ◆ There was essentially no correlation between time spent with physician for routine visits and depression status