

## EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL LONELINESS IN ETIOLOGY AND THERAPY OF MENTAL ILLNESS

V. Tylova, R. Ptáček, H. Kuželová

Department of Psychiatry, First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University in Prague, Prague, Czech Republic

**Introduction:** Loneliness is a distressing feelings, described as an individual experience of lack of satisfying relationships. There are a number of causes of loneliness: a loss of significant persons in life, divorce; it may occurs after the birth of a child or after marriage. Loneliness is common experience, most in adolescence and older adults. Many studies shows that loneliness is a predicting factor of mental and health illnesses and as such is associated with elevated blood pressure, increased risk of cancer and stroke, impaired sleep, impaired immune function, alcoholism, depressive symptoms and suicide. **The aim** of this pilot study is to describe the relationship of loneliness in four groups of psychiatric disorders (depression, dementia, schizofrenia and anxiety disorders).

**Methods:** Loneliness is measured by UCLA Loneliness Scale - R (N=50 for each group).

**Results:** The people with psychiatric disorders have higher level of loneliness ( $p < 0,01$ ), especially with dementia and depression ( $p < 0,1$ ), in comparison with the control group.

**Conclusions:** This pilot study, hand in hand with the relevant studies, demonstrates higher level of loneliness among people with specific psychiatric disorders. Therefore loneliness can be an important factor in etiology and therapy of mentall illness.