

MENSTRUALLY RELATED CYCLOTHYMIA: A CASE REPORT

M. Skokou, P. Gourzis

Department of Psychiatry, University of Patras, School of Medicine, Patras, Greece

Introduction: Premenstrual dysphoric disorder is a premenstrual syndrome comprising physical and psychic symptoms. Bipolar disorders, particularly "soft" forms, share symptoms such as depressive mood, irritability or mood reactivity with premenstrual dysphoric disorder, posing challenges on differential diagnosis. In the present work a case of a woman suffering from cyclothymia is reported, with mood episodes confined in the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle.

Methods: Case Report.

Results: A 42-year-old married Caucasian woman is presented, suffering from mood disorder episodes lasting for 10-12 days each, during the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle, and remitting after the beginning of her menses. The mood episodes occurred since the age of 20, in almost every menstrual cycle. The patient described hypomanic symptoms during the first 4-5 days of the luteal phase, reporting irritable mood, pressured speech, increased libido as well as vividness of her perceptions and excessive goal-directed activity. The hypomanic symptoms were followed by irritable and depressive mood, fatigue, hypersomnia, tearfulness, decreased self-esteem and pessimism, lasting for another 6-7 days. The patient also reported migraine and binge-eating episodes during each depressive phase. A full range of examinations, including blood and hormonal tests, yielded normal results. Lamotrigine was titrated at 200mg/day, with subsequent amelioration of symptoms.

Conclusions: The exact relationship between premenstrual dysphoric disorder and other disturbances, which either coexist, or deteriorate premenstrually, or even synchronize with the menstrual cycle, has not been elucidated yet. Studies aiming at a better understanding of this relationship could aid at accurate diagnosis and treatment.