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"ORGANIC PERSONALITY DISORDER" AS PART OF EARLY NEUROPSYCHIATRIC MANIFESTATIONS IN HUNTINGTON´S DISEASE - A CASE REPORT

J. Maia

CHPC, Centro Hospitalar Psiquiátrico de Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal

Huntington´s Disease (HD) is an inherited autosomal dominant disorder characterized by motor, cognitive and psychiatric symptomatology, being considered a paradigmatic neuropsychiatric disorder that includes all three components of the "Triadic Syndromes": dyskinesia, dementia and depression.
Firstly described in 1872 as an "Hereditary Chorea" by George Huntington only in 1993 was its responsible gene identified. A person who inherits the HD gene will sooner or later develop the disease. The age of onset, early signs and rate of disease progression vary greatly from person to person.
Neuropsychiatric symptoms are an integral part of HD and have been considered the earliest markers of the disease, presenting sometimes more than 10 years before a formal diagnosis is done. Patients may experience dysphoria, mood swings, agitation, irritability, hostile outbursts, psychotic symptoms and deep bouts of depression with suicidal ideation. Personality change is reported in 48% of the cases, with the paranoid subtype being described as the most prevalent. The clinical case presented illustrates a case of HD which started with insidious psychiatric symptoms and an important personality change.
Despite a wide number of medications being prescribed to help control emotional, movement and behaviour problems, there is still no treatment to stop or reverse the course of the disease. Furthermore, psychiatric manifestations are often amenable to treatment, and relief of these symptoms may provide significant improvement in patient´s and caregivers quality of life.
A greater awarness of psychiatric manifestations of HD is essential to an earlier diagnosis and an optimized therapeutic approach.

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