Quality of life, posttraumatic stress disorder and other psychiatric problems in children with tachyarrhythmias

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Objective: In this study, the aim was to search the quality of life, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms and other mental health problems in children with tachyarrhythmia; and to evaluate the variables that can affect these factors.

Methods: Thirty pediatric patients with tachyarrhythmia between the ages of 8-18 years that had been followed up at pediatric cardiology outpatient clinic were included in the study. Control group consisted of age-and-sex matched 32 healthy individuals. Socio-demographic information form, pediatric quality of life inventory (PedsLQ), state-trait anxiety inventory (STAI-TX), STAI-TX for children under 14 years of age, strength and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ), general health questionnaire (GHQ) were administered to children and the mothers in both the study and control groups. To evaluate PTSD in the study group, the children filled children's PTSD-reaction index (CPTS-RI), and the mothers filled traumatic stress symptom checklist (TSSC).

Results: The quality of life in children with tachyarrhythmia was not different from the control group. It was determined that the prosocial behavior scores of patients with tachyarrhythmia were lower than the control group, and the mothers of the patients were more anxious than the mothers in the control group. 40% of patients reported PTSD symptoms, in whom 2 (6.6%) had severe symptoms of PTSD. PTSD symptoms were correlated with age at the diagnosis, number of emergency referral, quality of life reported by children and occupational concern for child and mother. We found that 56% of the mothers of patients had symptoms accordant with possible PTSD, and PTSD symptoms were correlated with PedsLQ scores reported by children and the mothers, SDQ scores and mental health problems of mothers. PTSD symptoms of the patients and the mothers were not correlated with each other.

Conclusions: In our study, it was determined that the mothers of children with tachyarrhythmia were anxious and anxiety level of the mother were correlated with the mental health and quality of life of the patients. Also, PTSD symptoms can be seen in both children with tachyarrhythmia and their mothers. However, as tachyarrhythmia is a paroxysmal disorder, long-term follow-up studies are needed in these children.