Traumatic brain injury and schizophrenia-like psychosis: a case report

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The nature of the relationships between severe traumatic head injuries and subsequent emergence of psychotic psychopathology remains unclear, especially in cases where the temporal interval separating them is long. In this paper we present the case of a 18-years old male patient, who suffered a severe and diffuse head injury in a circulation accident at age 16. Twenty months after this accident, the patient started to exhibit, initially affective - depressive and subsequently psychotic psychopathology with delusional beliefs of reference, external influence as well as prominent and persistent body-dysmorphic delusions. Seven months later he was admitted to our clinic. In addition to his persistent delusions of body-dysmorphic content, he exhibited distractibility, poor concentration, affective lability and instability, and severe lack of insight. His psychometric testing disclosed a significant difference between his verbal and executive IQ scores, whose distributions were indicative of cerebr•al attempt (WAIS test) as well as inability to learn new verbal material through memorization (Rey A.V.I. test). Brain neuroimaging (MRI) revealed lesions of the cerebral tissue, especially in left thalamus, basal ganglia, as well as temporo-parietal lobes bilaterally. Reviewing the relevant international literature we found that the mean temporal interval between the occurrence of TBI and the manifestation of SLP amounts to 52-54 months, whereas localization of the traumatic lesions in the left temporal and right parietal lobes increase TBI patients’ vulnerability to SLP. Furthermore, our patient satisfies the Cumming's criteria for post-TBI SLP, namely, negative individual and family history for psychosis, positive history for TBI, post-TBI appearance of psychotic symptoms and postTBI cognitive deficits.

Key words: traumatic brain injury (TBI), schizophrenia-like psychoses (SLP).

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8. Ταξινόµηση ICD-10 Ψυχικών Διαταραχών και Διαταραχών της Συμπεριφοράς (F06, σελ. 74-77 και 81-82).
