Late complications in a cohort of work related traumatic spinal cord injured patients

CHERIE GUTIÉRREZ R1, GERARDO CORREA-ILLANES2

1 Residente de Fisiatría Universidad de Chile.
2 Hospital del Trabajador, ACHS.

Introduction: Late complications in spinal cord injured (SCI) are common, detectable and preventable by a follow up program.

Aim: To determine late complications suffered by SCI treated at Hospital del Trabajador (HT) of Asociación Chilena de Seguridad (ACHS), subject to follow-up evaluation program and living in distant rural areas of Santiago.

Patients and Methods: Patients evaluated in follow-up evaluation program of HT ACHS between 2000 and 2006 who underwent multidisciplinary evaluation, laboratory studies and imaging research and nursing interview. Statistical analysis was performed by parametric tests.

Results: 78 patients were monitored, 74 men and 4 women, age 48.7 ± 11.8 years; the most frequent SCI was complete paraplegia (52.6%). All patients had complications during the observation period. The most frequent complications were dyslipidemia (80.8%), pain (71.8%), spasticity (53.8%), urinary tract infection (52.6%), constipation (48.7%) and insomnia (46.2%). 33.3% of patients had pressure ulcers. The prevalence of diabetes mellitus was 10.2%. Abdominal ultrasound detected 24.4% of gallstones and 24.4% of fatty liver.

Discussion: The incidence of late complications in our SCI cohort is very similar to that described previously, existing more frequent in chronic diseases than in the general population, due to decreased physical activity and altered lipid and carbohydrate metabolism.

Conclusions: High incidence of late complications in SCI recommends develop a multidisciplinary evaluation program and screening tests to early detection of them.

Key words: Late complications, spinal cord injury, follow-up evaluation, follow-up care, pressure ulcers, follow up study.