

SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM – PSYCHOSOMATICS

CURRENT CONCEPTS OF PSYCHOSOMATIC DISEASES

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In a long history of medicine, body and mind were always inseparably connected. Current understanding of psychosomatics takes into account the interaction between physical and psychic in all disorders and diseases. Optimal progress in our understanding of the aetiology of psychosomatic disorders is possible only if we take into account the theories and techniques from neuroscience and cellular and molecular biology. Neuroscience has started to make a comeback in psychosomatic research and promises to advance the field in important ways. Genetic studies have also an important role in the further development of psychosomatic medicine. Moreover, there are now sufficient data to conclude that immune modulation by psychosocial stressors or interventions can lead to actual health changes. Focusing on such mechanistic studies in psychosomatic medicine may contribute to its acceptance into the field of medicine. Elements of psychotherapeutic approach in psychosomatic medicine are reached by creating an interpersonal environment of understanding and trust at initial examination and during the process of diagnosis, evaluation and therapy. The psychotherapeutic technique of choice in psychosomatic medicine is supportive psychotherapy, because it aims to alleviate and eliminate difficulties and establish psychological balance. Psychopharmacological interventions are an important part of the management of medically ill patients with psychiatric disorders. Systematic research on the effectiveness of psychotropic drugs in liaison psychiatry settings is still very limited; therefore, the clinician has to carefully consider medical and psychiatric diagnoses and rely on the knowledge from clinical trials with patients who are not medically ill. The pharmacodynamic and pharmacokinetic drug-drug interactions and adverse effects of psychotropic agents have to be taken into account in the treatment of patients with psychiatric disorders in liaison psychiatry setting. In this symposium we will present current concepts on the aetiology, optimal diagnostic and therapeutic approaches and specific problems in various psychosomatic disorders.

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