

# A Study on the Prevalence of Psychiatric Morbidity in Post-Operative Patients Who Have Undergone Major Abdominal Surgeries

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## I. Introduction

Prevalence of psychiatric disorders is quite common in surgical patients. However, surgeons are less likely to refer patients to psychiatrists other than physicians. Therefore a large proportions of psycho pathology in surgical patients is either undiagnosed or misdiagnosed and not optimally treated. This study focuses on common psychiatric issues that generally arise in post operative patients who have undergone major abdominal surgeries. In the immediate post period, issues like anxiety, depression, post traumatic stress disorders, acute stress disorders, delirium etc, may be seen in surgical patients which may be under recognized and under treated. The aim of the study is to assess the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity among post operative patients who have undergone major abdominal surgeries.

## II. Materials and Methods

120 patients who got operated for major abdominal surgeries were included in this study after applying the inclusion and the exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria includes all patients aged between 18-60 years. Both male and female patients. Major abdominal surgeries. Exclusion criteria includes age below 18 and above 60. Patients having other severe illnesses and disability. Patients with history of previous psychiatric morbidity. Patients with history of alcohol abuse.

Evaluation and treatment protocol: In the preoperative period, psychiatric consultation regarding several common psycho-social issues, informed consent, assessment of patients decision making capacity, as well as presence of disruptive symptoms and behaviours reflecting underlying psychopathology was done. In the post operative period a detailed history regarding the type of procedure undergone, socio-demographic status, personal history of psychiatric illness, family history was recorded. A thorough clinical examination and mental status examination was done. ICD 10 was used to diagnose psychiatric morbidity among the patients. Brief psychiatric rating scale was used to assess the severity of the psychiatric illness. Prevalence of psychiatric morbidity among the post operative patients was calculated.

**Observations:** In this study 120 patients were evaluated.

The sex distribution in both the group are as follows,

Female	Male	Total
32	88	120

The age distribution in the post operative patients are as follows,

Age	No of patients	Percentage
20-29	13	10.833
30-39	38	31.667
40-49	33	27.5
50-59	36	29.999

The procedures underwent by the patients are as follows,

Procedures	No	%
Hollow viscus perforation closure	27	22.5
TV with gastrojejunostomy	8	6.7
Ventral wall hernias	14	11.7
Open adhesiolysis	23	19.2
Open cholecystectomies	14	11.7
Hystrectomies	9	7.5
splenectomies	2	1.7
Small bowel resection and anastomosis	10	8.3
Sigmoid resections	6	5
Gastrectomies	5	4.2

APR	1	0.8
Puestows	1	0.8
	120	100

Comparison between psychiatric morbidity in elective and emergency surgeries.

	No	Psychiatric morbidity
Emergency surgery	68	18
Elective surgeries	52	15

Percentage of psychiatric morbidity in the post operative patients.

	No	Percentage
Delirium	3	2.5
Mild depression	10	8.333
Moderate depression	2	1.667
Panic anxiety disorder	1	0.833
Mixed anxiety depressive disorder	6	5
Acute stress reaction	7	5.833
Brief depressive reactions	4	3.333
Normal patients	87	72.5

The above table shows the individual prevalence of psychiatric diseases in the study population.

### III. Discussion

A total of 120 patients were screened for psychiatric morbidity in the post operative period. All of them underwent major abdominal surgeries. The patients were interviewed in the fifth post operative day and screened for psychiatric morbidity. Out of 120 patients, 33 patients had a diagnosis of psychiatric illness. This is in correspondence with the study done by Rabkin et al where the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity was around 29%. In Lubek general hospital, study by Volker et al, the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity in post operative patients was around 28%. King et al reported that 31% of a sample of 192 post operative patients developed psychiatric morbidity. In India, first study by Jacob et al, reported an overall psychiatric morbidity of 26%. In our study the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity in post operative patients is around 27% (n=33). Common psychiatric disorders include mood disorders, anxiety disorders, substance use disorders, cognitive disorders, psychotic disorders and delirium. Psychopathology may have impact on treatment adherence, quality of life and adaptive functioning.

### IV. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study one may conclude that a considerable number of patients have psychiatric morbidity, depressive disorder being the commonest. In short term care after surgery treatment should mainly focus on managing depression and anxiety. Anti depressants and anxiolytics should be prescribed in diagnosed cases. To sustain a good long term outcome after surgery treatment of depression is more important than treatment of anxiety. The above findings call for continuing education on mental health at all levels of surgical facilities and also for routine screening for mental disorders.

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