Examination of Symptom Clusters in Acute and Chronic Pain Patients

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Objectives:
(1) Determine which of 15 symptoms are more commonly found in community patients with pain (CPWP; N=326), acute pain patients (APPs; N=329), chronic pain patients (CPPs; N=324) versus community non-patients without pain (CNPWP; N=129); (2) Determine which symptoms are more commonly found in APPs and CPPs versus CPWP; (3) Determine which symptoms are more commonly found in APPs and CPPs; (4) In CPWP, APPs, and CPPs, determine which symptoms cluster with each other and the number of clusters; and (5) Determine if cluster number and cluster symptom makeup differ by pain level.

A larger set of items containing the 15 symptoms had been administered to the above groups who were compared statistically according to the above objectives for symptom endorsement. Next, a cluster analysis for the 15 symptoms was performed for CPWP, APPs, and CPPs. Finally, a two step cluster analysis was performed on CPPs with moderate pain (5-7 level) and CPPs with severe pain (8-10 level).

Setting: Community plus rehabilitation facilities.

Results:
(1) All three groups (CPWP, APPs, and CPPs) had statistically significantly greater frequency of 14 symptoms versus CNPWP; (2) CPWP were similar to APPs for frequency of all 15 symptoms; (3) CPWP had a statistically significantly greater frequency than CPWP of 9 symptoms (numbness, dizziness, falling, concentration, headaches) and versus APPs for 13 symptoms (above 9 symptoms); (4) In CPWP, APPs, and CPPs, determine which symptoms cluster with each other and the number of clusters; and (5) Determine if cluster number and cluster symptom makeup differ by pain level.