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Analysis of the functional independence of patients with amiotrophic lateral sclerosis

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive neurodegenerative disease characterized by selective degeneration of motoneurons in the cortex, brain stem and spinal cord. Diversity in the clinical condition is a well recognized feature of the disease. Functional Independence (FI) relates to functional activities, identified by the individual as essential for the preservation of their physical and psychological well-being. Patients diagnosed with ALS have direct effects on functionality and well-being. Objective: Analyze the FI index of patients with ALS, living in Aracaju/SE. Methods: This is an analytical, descriptive, cross-sectional study, with sampling for convenience. Data collection was performed in the patients' homes and Functional Independence Measure (MIF) was used to measure functional independence levels. Results and Discussion: Patients of both sexes were evaluated, being 75% male and 25% female. The mean age was 63.2 years and the time of diagnosis was on average of 4.7 years. Of these, 50% breathed in ambient air and 50% used mechanical ventilation assistants, 75% were assisted with auxiliary devices and 25% were restricted to the bed. All patients receive medical care and 25% of them are assisted by a multidisciplinary team. MIF presented a mean of 65.25 points in total, indicating a dependence between modified and complete in the individuals studied. Chronic diseases such as ALS produce significant repercussions on IF, but with preservation of cognition and these are some of the main problems in the life of patients. Conclusion: Individuals affected by ALS have heterogeneous alterations, with a consequent decrease in their FI. The use of instruments such as MIF is important to assist in more personalized therapeutic action and contribute to the delay of functional dependence.

Keywords: Chronic Disease; Functionality; Neurodegenerative Diseases

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