

JOINT EVENT

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Epilepsy spectrum disorders in psychiatry: An old-new concept**Nash N Boutros**

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Episodic psychiatric symptoms are not uncommon but are neither well-characterized or well-studied. There is currently no clear conceptualization of how these symptoms occur, what is appropriate work up and possible treatments. This group of symptoms is very likely of heterogeneous etiologies. We here proposing that at least a sizeable subgroup of patients exhibiting episodic symptoms (lasting from few minutes to no longer than few hours) fall on the epilepsy spectrum resulting from the presence of focal cortical/subcortical hyperexcitability within the frontal-temporal limbic regions. We provide some evidence for this assumption from preliminary data collected from patients with panic disorder and a separate group of patients with psychogenic non-epileptic seizures. Hyperexcitable brain tissue is the characteristic of epileptogenic brain foci and recent advances from epilepsy research point to abnormally increased localized coherence within epileptic zones. Coherence is a measure of synchrony between signals from different regions of the brain. Coherence source imaging assess neural coherence within neural tissue (as contrasted to coherence assessed at surface electrode recording locations). Data is collected primarily from magnetoencephalography (MEG). Evidence that some of these patients respond well to anti-seizure therapy is also provided. We further propose methods to test the advanced hypothesis as well as highlighting shortcomings of available literature.

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