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Evaluation of cyberchondria and obsessive beliefs in adults

Zeynep Demirtas¹, Gulsum O Emiral¹, Seval Caliskan¹, Sevil A Zencirci¹, Alaettin Unsal¹, Didem Arslantas¹ and Kazim Tirpan²¹Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Turkey²Kemal Nurhan Mani Family Medicine Unit, Turkey

Statement of the Problem: Cyberchondria expresses the increasing health anxiety as a result of repetitive and excessive search of health-related information on internet. Cyberchondria can play a role in the development and maintenance of obsessive beliefs. The study aimed to investigate the relationship between cyberchondria and obsessive beliefs and determine of factors related to cyberchondria.

Method: This cross-sectional study carried out on the internet users who applied to primary health care units in Eskisehir, Turkey. The cluster sampling method was used and each primary health care unit was considered as a cluster. The study group consisted of 777 people. The individuals were administered Personal Information Form, Cyberchondria Severity Scale and Obsessive Beliefs Questionnaire through face to face interview method by the researchers. Multiple linear regression analyze was examined using the variables that had p-value lower than 0.05 from univariate linear regression analysis.

Findings: Of the participants 50.8% was female. The ages ranged between 18-63, mean(SD) 32.6(9.6) years. According to the results of multiple linear regression analysis, frequency of internet use, source of information about health, searching about the doctor whom will apply from the internet, leaving the physician's prescribed education by getting information from the internet and obsessive beliefs were found to be related to cyberchondria (F:25.825;p<0.001).

Conclusion & Significance: It is concluded that obsessive beliefs are positively related to cyberchondria. As cyberchondria affects health related behaviors it is important to ensure reliable health information on internet. Cyberchondria tendency of individuals with obsessive beliefs should be considered.

Recent Publications:

1. Norr AM, Oglesby ME, Raines AM, Macatee RJ, Allan NP, Schmidt NB (2015) Relationships between cyberchondria and obsessive-compulsive symptom dimensions. *Psychiatry research* 230:441-446.
2. Fergus TA, Russell LH (2016) Does cyberchondria overlap with health anxiety and obsessive-compulsive symptoms? An examination of latent structure and scale interrelations. *Journal of anxiety disorders* 38:88-94.
3. Starcevic V (2017) Cyberchondria: Challenges of Problematic Online Searches for Health-Related Information. *Psychotherapy and psychosomatics* 86:129-133.
4. McElroy E, Shevlin M (2014) The development and initial validation of the cyberchondria severity scale (CSS). *Journal of anxiety disorders* 28:259-265.
5. Obsessive Compulsive Cognitions Working Group (2005) Psychometric validation of the obsessive belief questionnaire and interpretation of intrusions inventory Part 2: Factor analyses and testing of a brief version. *Behaviour Research and Therapy* 43:1527-1542.

Biography

Zeynep Demirtas has been graduated from Uludag University, Turkey as medical doctor in 2014. She is a research assistant at Public Health Department of Eskisehir Osmangazi University Faculty of Medicine since 2016. She is interested in preventive medicine and community mental health subjects.

zeynepdemirtas@gmail.com