

P726 - Is benign MS ,benign'?

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Introduction: Benign MS (BMS) was defined as patients that are fully functional in all neurologic systems after 15 years after onset (DD) (Lublin and Reingold, 1996). Amato described the most commonly used definition of patients (PwMS) not exceeding an EDSS of 3.0 after 15 years. The definition and existence of BMS is still a matter of debate. In the age of earliest possible MS diagnosis, individual prognosis and initiation of DMT - the clinical relevance of a “benign” disease course is a pressing question.

Aims: This study aims to provide quantitative and qualitative analysis on BMS in Germany.

Methods: Data from the German MS-Register was analysed. Only PwMS with a DD of ≥ 15 y were included. These were divided into “benign” with $EDSS \leq 3$ and “non-benign” with $EDSS > 3$. Descriptive analyses were performed using R and group comparisons were done using Chi²-Tests, considering p-values $< 1\%$ statistically significant. Survival time analyses beyond the 15 years disease duration were performed using Kaplan-Meier.

Results: We identified 8,794 PwMS with a $DD \geq 15$ years. 3,794 patients (43.1%) fulfilled the criteria of $EDSS \leq 3.0$. Mean age at last visit was 53.3 (± 9.9) years.

78.0% of the *benign*-PwMS compared to 71.7% were females. Mean age at onset for benign-PwMS was 28.7 (± 8.5) years and mean time from onset to diagnosis was 4.5 (± 6.5) years compared to 30.6(± 9.4) and 4.2(± 6.6) years. Within the benign group 92% were RRMS, 6.0% SPMS, 1.6% PPMS. The levels of SPMS and PPMS were higher (45.7%, 9.7%) in the non-benign group. Levels of employment (70%) were higher than in non-benign patients (34%). We analysed the benign-subgroup for survival (defined as $EDSS \leq 3$), showing, that only about 55% of the benign-PwMS stayed benign for further 10 years, with males having lesser chances.

Conclusions:

- With 43% a high number of the patients did fulfil the internationally most commonly used definition of BMS.
- In contrast, the low number of benign-PwMS with DD of 25 years shows, that the time to measure “true benignity” of a MS might not be at DD of 15 years
- In contrast to the low EDSS a high number (30%) of “benign” patients is unemployed (already after 15 years).
- The focus on the EDSS in today’s definition of BMS, which disregards “soft/hidden” symptoms like fatigue, cognition and emotions, could be a possible explanation.
- A revision of the definition for “benign“-MS is due.

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