

# 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on PSYCHIATRY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS

May 20-21, 2019 | Rome, Italy

Stella Tamburello, J Clin Psychiatry Cog Psychol 2019, Volume 3

## FEAR OF GOING UNDER ANAESTHESIA: AN EMERGING DISORDER AND ITS POSSIBLE CORRELATIONS

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**Background:** Numerous studies have tried to highlight the anxious component linked to surgical interventions; a much lower number has instead focused on anxiety concerning anaesthesia. The present study aimed to investigate the anxious processes related to the fear of anaesthesia, evaluating the association between this specific phobia and a series of variables, including metacognitive beliefs and processes, tendency to control, anxiety, depression and emotional dysregulation.

**Methods:** The study involved the administration of self-report questionnaires to 90 subjects (58 women and 32 men). The sample was recruited through accidental sampling. The age range of the sample is between 18 and 79 years. All subjects were administered: the Amsterdam Preoperative Anxiety and Information Scale (APAIS), the Metacognitions Questionnaire-short version (MCQ-30), the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) and the Emotion Dysregulation Scale (EDS).

**Results:** Contrary to what the author had hypothesized, the results of our study do not seem to report mediation variables with respect to the anxiety of anaesthesia, which fits perfectly into the spectrum of anxiety disorders, classifying itself as a specific phobia to all effects. Furthermore, the analysis of correlations would be in line with numerous studies on specific phobias that emphasize the subject's pathogenic beliefs and the tendency to focus on their own body sensations and to focus attention internally and above all, on physiological changes. The total APAIS score is positively correlated with depression; anxiety was positively associated with the total APAIS score and all its subscales, except for the one that evaluates the anxiety for the intervention. The data of our study confirm the strong correlation between anaesthesia anxiety and emotional dysregulation, suggesting a possible phobic response.

**Conclusions:** Summarizing, therefore, an easier tendency to catastrophic thoughts and reduced emotional regulation could be essential factors in the maintenance of what can be defined as a real phobia of anaesthesia.

## BIOGRAPHY

Stella Tamburello has completed her PhD in Cognitive Psychology and Clinical Assessment in the 2014 from European University of Rome, Italy. She has been continuing her career as a researcher and a psychotherapist at Skinner Institute of Rome, a famous clinical center specialized in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

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