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First neurological symptoms of multiple sclerosis

Początkowe objawy neurologiczne w stwardnieniu rozsianym

The first clinical symptoms of multiple sclerosis (MS) are characterized by great variety. Commonly, one assumes that most often these are pyramidal, sensory, cerebellar symptoms, diplopia, sphincter disorders, speech disorders or lesions of the ocular nerve. There are reported others, the so-called non-typical symptoms, or rare symptoms of the initial stage of the demyelizational process (e.g. peripheral paralysis n. VII, neuralgia n. V, ischias). The incidence of the above symptoms is different with various authors. Determining the basic symptoms which initiate MS allows us to quickly arrive at a diagnosis. In order to determine neurological symptoms and their incidence 194 patients were analyzed. They were all treated at the Neurological Department of Medical University of Lublin and in the Scientific-Clinical Centre of Demyelination Diseases in Lublin. The patients diagnosed with MS on the basis of Poser's criteria were selected for the assessment (6).

RESULTS

194 patients took part in the study: 76 men (39.18%) and 118 women (60.82%). In the case of 145 patients (74.74%) the onset was monosymptomatic, in 49 (25.26%) - multisymptomatic (two or three symptoms). The incidence of particular symptoms of MS (in percentage) and in relation to sex and the onset is shown in Table 1.

The first symptoms of MS were manifested between 11 and 53 years. The first manifestations of MS often took place at the age of 21-30 and they were mainly motor disor-

ders (35.44%), sensory disorders (27.85%) and optic neuritis (20.25%). There were only 3 persons with MS onset after 50 years of age. In the patients in the youngest age group (11-20 years) motor symptoms were observed as the first but relatively often also optic neuritis and diplopia.

Table 1. The incidence of particular symptoms of MS (in percentage) and in relation to sex and the onset

		Sex		Onset	
		M	F	monosymptomatic	multisymptomatic
	%	39.18	60.82	74.74	25.26
Sensory	23.71	22.37	24.58	16.55	44.9
Motor	45.88	47.37	44.92	47.59	40.82
Diplopia	14.43	18.42	11.86	7.59	34.69
Cerebellar	8.76	7.89	9.32	7.59	12.24
Optic neuritis	20.1	17.11	22.03	20.0	20.41
Sphincters	3.09	3.95	2.54	1.38	8.16
Speech	0.52	1.32	0	0	2.04
Others	6.19	6.58	5.93	2.07	18.37

Table 2. The incidence of first symptoms in relation to sex and in particular age ranges in patients with monosymptomatic and multisymptomatic onset of MS (in percentage)

	Monosymptomatic Onset of MS							Multisymptomatic Onset of MS						
	sex		age					sex		age				
	F	M	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-53	F	M	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-53
%	39.3	60.7	21.38	41.38	28.28	6.9	2.07	61.2	38.8	16.33	38.78	32.65	12.24	0
Sensory	19.3	12.3	12.9	21.67	12.2	20	0	40	52.6	25	47.37	43.75	66.67	0
Motor	45.5	50.9	38.71	38.33	65.85	50	66.67	43.3	36.8	50	26.32	50	50	0
Diplopia	6.8	8.8	12.9	6.67	4.88	10	0	26.7	47.4	62.5	42.11	12.5	33.33	0
Cerebellar	6.8	8.8	9.68	11.67	2.44	0	0	16.7	5.3	12.5	15.79	12.5	0	0
Optic neuritis	21.5	17.5	22.58	21.67	14.63	20	33.33	23.3	15.8	25	15.79	18.75	33.33	0
Sphincters	1.1	1.8	0	1.67	2.44	0	0	6.6	10.5	12.5	10.53	6.25	0	0
Speech	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.3	0	5.26	0	0	0
Others	2.3	1.75	3.23	1.67	0	10	0	16.7	21.3	25	15.79	18.75	16.67	0

The patients with monosymptomatic and multisymptomatic onset of MS in relation to sex and in particular age ranges are presented in Table 2.

DISCUSSION

In the case of the patients under study motor disorders occur most often as the first symptom. They dominate both in women and in men. These are values higher than those given by other authors (2, 3, 5). Swanson (7) and Bhatia (1) arrived at similar results. The incidence of the remaining symptoms is in accord with reports from other authors (2, 3, 5).

In patients with a monosymptomatic onset of MS motor disorders dominate as well. Optic neuritis and sensory disorders are often the first symptoms. In the group of patients with a multisymptomatic onset those that occur most often are the following: sensory, motor symptoms and diplopia. What is worth noting is the greater incidence of rare initial symptoms (tremor of extremities, peripheral paresis n. VII, neuralgia n. V, asthenia of hearing and taste).

The first manifestations of MS often took place at the age of 21-30 and they were mainly motor disorders, sensory disorders and optic neuritis. We observed the rarest cases of MS after 50. There were 3 persons at this age in our group. The patients in the youngest age group also manifested first motor symptoms but relatively often also optic neuritis and diplopia.

Examining the first clinical symptoms of MS in children, Ghezzi et al.(4) reported that most often we find here diplopia, sensory disorders, motor disorders, and optic neuritis.

In the group of patients with a monosymptomatic and multisymptomatic onset the first symptoms of MS occurred at the age of 21-30 and those were motor, sensory disorders, optic neuritis in the case of patients with a monosymptomatic onset, and sensory disorders and diplopia in the patients with a multisymptomatic onset.

Our study confirms a great variety of the first clinical symptoms.

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STRESZCZENIE

Pierwsze objawy neurologiczne w stwardnieniu rozsianym (SM) charakteryzują się dużą zmiennością. Określenie typowych objawów inicjujących stwardnienie rozsiane pomogłoby w szybkim ustaleniu rozpoznania. Dokonałiśmy analizy początkowych objawów u 194 chorych z SM rozpoznanych na podstawie kryteriów Posera. U 145 chorych (74,74%) początek choroby był jednoobjawowy, u 49 (25,26%) - wielobjawowy (dwa lub trzy objawy). U chorych z jednoobjawowym początkiem dominowały objawy ruchowe. Często również jako pierwsze objawy występowały pozagałkowe zapalenie nerwu wzrokowego i objawy czuciowe. W grupie chorych z początkiem wielobjawowym najczęściej pojawiały się objawy czuciowe, ruchowe i diplopia. Pierwsze objawy SM występowały najczęściej w wieku 21-30 lat i były to głównie objawy ruchowe, czuciowe i pozagałkowe zapalenie nerwu wzrokowego

W grupach chorych z jedno- i wielobjawowym początkiem pierwsza manifestacja SM pojawiała się w wieku 21-30 lat i były to zaburzenia ruchowe, czuciowe i pozagałkowe zapalenie nerwu wzrokowego u chorych z początkiem jednoobjawowym oraz objawy czuciowe i diplopia u chorych z początkiem wielobjawowym. Nasze badania potwierdzają dużą zmienność w zakresie początkowych objawów SM.