Beyond Dystonia: Are We Detecting and Managing Non-Motor Symptoms Properly?

Dr. Davide Martino
The spectrum of non-motor symptoms in cervical dystonia and other adult-onset isolated dystonias: pain, depression, anxiety, sleep, fatigue

Screening and management of non-motor symptoms in dystonia:
- Barriers and facilitators
- Towards a new pathway of care

Special considerations on pharmacological management and mood symptoms in dystonia
What impacts quality of life in dystonia?

- Degree of depressive symptoms
- Generalised and social anxiety
- Dystonia severity
- Tremor severity: only worse physical functioning and pain
- Younger age: emotional well-being and vitality
- No differences between sexes

Junker et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 2021
What causes disability in dystonia?

- More data on cervical dystonia
- Despite motor improvements with botulinum toxin, many patients still experience difficulties with performing daily life activities
- Psychiatric features (depression, anxiety) and pain → largest contribution to disability

Much more than physical functioning and dystonia severity

[van den Dool et al., Parkinsonism Relat Disord 2016]
Non-motor symptoms

- Many people living with dystonia experience non-motor symptoms contributing to disability and reducing participation in daily activities (Smit et al. 2017a; Stamelou et al. 2012; Torres and Rosales 2017)

- Non-motor symptoms include: pain, depression, anxiety, apathy, impaired sleep, fatigue, catastrophizing, sensorimotor disturbances, olfactory and visual problems

- Non-motor symptoms are important when considering the overall management of dystonia as they play a significant role in quality of life (Smit et al. 2017a; Torres and Rosales 2017; Tomic et al. 2016).
Pain

- **55-89% of people** with cervical dystonia (68% in neck and shoulders → spreads to upper back, up to the head on the bent side and down to the ipsilateral upper limb)

- “exhausting”, “radiating”, “prickly”, “pulling the neck”

- 10-20% have **chronic daily headache** (occipital 79%, cervical 73%, temporal 43%, frontal 36%, vertex 25%, retroorbital 11%)

- People with blepharospasm have **painful photophobia**

- **38%** of people with focal hand dystonia have pain

- 36% of people with focal lower limb dystonia have pain

- **NEVERTHELESS** → No specific classification criteria
Pain: what are the risk factors/mechanisms?

• Hypothesized mechanisms include:
  prolonged contraction of the “dystonic” muscles
  prolonged contraction of the “compensating” muscles
  altered brain processing of painful stimuli $\rightarrow$ reduced pressure pain tolerance in focal hand dystonia [Perez-de-Heredia-Torres et al., 2021]

• In CD, higher levels of pain acceptance co-occur with lower levels of perceived pain

• In CD, a *catastrophic interpretation of pain* correlates with severity of depression and anxiety [Wadon et al., 2022]
Pain: how can we treat it?

- Oral meds for dystonia are non-specific (Marciniec et al. 2019; Siongco et al. 2020)
- Botulinum toxin injections relieve pain in cervical dystonia, even before relaxing muscles (Marciniec et al. 2019; Siongco et al. 2020)
- Deep brain stimulation of the globus pallidus internus is likely to reduce pain
- Kinesiotaping and cerebellar neuromodulation: preliminary results
No obvious difference in dystonia spread between those with and those without depression

Significant difference in age at onset → presence of depression associated with earlier age at dystonia onset

[Moriarty A et al., Mov Disord Clin Pract 2022]
Anxiety and depression in writer’s cramp

- Anxiety 51.2%
- Depression 46.2%
- Higher scores of HDRS-24 associated with lower scores of SF-36 in physical and mental determinants of QoL
2-fold increased risk of dx of depressive disorder
2.13 of anxiety disorder
80% greater risk of suicide attempts/death by suicide

FULL SIBLINGS
Overall pooled prevalence of any depressive symptoms or disorders: 31.4% for cervical dystonia, 29.2% for cranial dystonia, and 30.9% for studies examining mixed forms of AOID.

Major depressive disorder more prevalent than dysthymia across all forms of AOID.

Prevalence of MDD higher in cervical dystonia than in other forms, whereas prevalence of dysthymia higher in cranial dystonia.
Cervical dystonia

Cranial dystonia

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER: 18%
SOCIAL PHOBIA: 25%
SOCIAL ANXIETY: part. in laryngeal dystonia
SHI-CD (Social cognition and Habituation to social stimuli In Cervical Dystonia)
iCBT for depression/anxiety in CD

Wadon et al., *Clin Parkinsonism Relat Disord* 2021
Are people with dystonia who also have depression and anxiety more prone to use meds?

• Dystonia Coalition cross-sectional study → 37 centres in US, Canada, Europe and Australia → 2,026 participants (76% focal [61% cervical, 12% laryngeal, 10% limb, 9% cranial, 8% blepharospasm]

• If anxiety/depression was present, patients were twice as likely to be taking oral medications (also useful) for dystonia

• Particularly:
  
  BENZODIAZEPINES  
  OTHER SLEEP-INDUCING MEDS (e.g. zopiclone)  
  MUSCLE RELAXANTS  
  ANTICHOLINERGICS (e.g. trihexyphenidyl)

[ Pirio Richardson et al. Neurology 2017 ]
May/should people with dystonia who also have depression and anxiety be treated with antidepressants?

- There is no valid reason to be extra cautious to treat depression and anxiety with antidepressants (SSRIs) in patients with cervical dystonia.
- Still no clear evidence confirming that antidepressants improve depression in patients with dystonia, compared to placebo, but evidence is limited.
- More evidence of safety of SSRIs in patients with dystonia.

[Zoons et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 2018; Duarte et al., Parkinsonism Relat Disord 2018]
Can BoNT-A improve depression and anxiety in AOID?

Costanzo et al., *Toxins* 2021

- Promising evidence in favour of efficacy, but no change on TWSTRSpsych
- Overall, still not uniform
- No correlation between motor change and non-motor change (incl. pain and depression/anxiety) or between different NMS
Does deep brain stimulation surgery improve depression and anxiety in people with dystonia?

- Overall, anxiety, mood and cognition seem to remain stable postoperatively
- There may be some improvement if patients with moderate-severe depression are included (due to different causes)
- Caution for neuropsychiatric problems in the screening for DBS remains very important

[Eggink et al., Parkinsonism Relat Disord 2018]
Do people with dystonia have sleep problems?

- Poor night sleep quality in at least half of the patients with cervical (and cranial) dystonia (increased sleep latency, decreased sleep efficiency, with more awakenings and less REM sleep)
- Independent from the severity of dystonia
- Poor sleep quality influenced by concurrent depression / may worsen quality of life in dystonia
- Excessive daytime sleepiness less common complaint

[Hertenstein et al., Sleep Med Rev 2016; Antelmi et al., Sleep 2017]
Do people with dystonia have sleep problems?

- Inverse relationship between quality of sleep and efficacy of sensory trick (→ poorer sleep leads to less effective tricks? → vicious cycle of fatigue and diminished ability to exploit the trick?)

  [Benadof et al., Trem Other Hyperkin Mov 2019]

- BoNT-A, even if successful in reducing motor symptoms, may not eliminate sleep problems
- Effect of GPi-DBS upon sleep: limited evidence (on Meige sdr)
- How much can the use of other medications, e.g. benzodiazepines, explain these sleep disturbances?

  [Hertenstein et al., Sleep Med Rev 2016]
Do people with dystonia suffer from excessive fatigue?

• Moderate-severe fatigue: >40% of adults with dystonia

• More fatigue correlates with poorer quality of life, regardless of depression and sleep problems

• We don’t know whether this improves with treatment

• Fatigue as significant barrier to engagement in exercise and physical activity

• Writer’s cramp → greater fatigue, lower scores on mental component summary of SF-36

[Wagle Shukla et al., Int J Neurosci 2016; McCambridge et al., Front Neurol 2019, Zhang et al., Park Relat Disord 2022]
Depression and anxiety: barriers and facilitators to screening and management

• Health professionals recruited from 4 Canadian MD clinics in Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Montréal

• All experience of >1 AOID patient with co-morbid depression and/or anxiety

• Patients with AOID + current/past anxiety or mood disorder from DMRF Canada local support groups and MD clinics

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
Depression and anxiety: barriers and facilitators to screening and management

• Focus groups and interviews: 45 participants (31 F): 10 MD neurologists, 4 psychiatrists, 5 MD nurses, 8 allied health/primary care practitioners, 18 patients

• Framework analysis approach → summarizing and classifying data within a thematic framework approach

• Indexed based on the Theoretical Domains Framework and the Capability, Opportunity, Motivation and Behaviours (COM-B) system

• Behaviour change techniques identified to overcome the identified barriers and promote the implementation of facilitators

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
Theme 1: Gaps in Knowledge
Theme 2: Beliefs on the origin of emotional symptoms in AOID

• “The worst part is not knowing whether it is normal or abnormal to feel depressed with my dystonia. Probably anyone would feel depressed walking around with their head on their shoulder. So, I always thought that it was inevitable feeling like this when you have dystonia and that I had to pull myself together with my own resources”. → PRECONCEPTION OF MOOD ISSUES AS SECONDARY TO OTHER ‘PHYSICAL’ SYMPTOMS

• “An excellent seminar was put on just a few years ago in my city. They did a really good job at describing many of the aspects of dystonia, including depression, and how you could mitigate them by activities, exercise, diet. etc. If the opportunity to follow similar events were available again, I would certainly take it.” → DEARTH OF COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

• “The neurologist is very busy, and the time is very short, but it is almost like after you see the neurologist it would be nice to go to another person who can give you more information or something to read or direct you towards information online”. [Martino et al., submitted 2022]
Theme 3: Self-isolation and stigma

“I will have the odd person that will come up to me and ask me if I have Parkinson’s, if I am under a lot of stress, or even if I have just come out of rehab […] I have learned over time that people are inquisitive or simply commiserate you, and as a result have become quiet and withdrawn”.

“Well, there is always difficulty in getting help for mood symptoms because usually most people, as you know, especially as they grow older, are reluctant to discuss that.” → ACCESSING SOCIAL SUPPORT WITHIN PATIENTS’ ORGANIZATIONS [Morgan et al., Disabil Rehabil 2021]

“What is it that you are anxious about?” Participant [Patient 6]: “The pain, the people staring, questions, but mostly the pain”.  [Martino et al., submitted 2022]
Theme 4: Physicians’ communication skills

“And he kept giving me pills. And he did not have the time to talk. That level could be looked at. I think it is not the doctors’ fault. The way we pressure doctors to see a patient every 10 minutes. They haven’t got the time. And nurses maybe have more time [...] to talk to the patient for half an hour and then have the doctor come in for 10 minutes.”

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
And I think one of the challenges is that our patients are mixed in in our movement disorders clinic, or the patients that come every three months for toxin treatment. For sure having a screening tool with a few questions that they can fill out would make everything easier. So, I would love to have a good conversation with them, but time is limited. [Neurologist]

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
“Around the time of my diagnosis of dystonia, I started feeling anxious around people and often tearful and depressed. My GP told me it was because I had dystonia and to talk to my neurologist. My neurologist disagreed and threw the ball’s back into the GP’s court. I lived like this for more than 3 years, feeling increasingly hopeless”.

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
Theme 6: Local networks of providers

“I think that behavioural treatments (like mindfulness-based or cognitive-behavioural) are under-used in these patients, and family physicians may not always have great training in non-medical modalities of treatment.” [Psychiatrist]

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Domain in the Theoretical Domain Framework</th>
<th>Behaviour change technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under-diagnosis of depression/anxiety</td>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Periodical screening with self-rated tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of nurses’ involvement</td>
<td>Professional role</td>
<td>Nurses act as case managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of coordination of local resources</td>
<td>Environmental and Context Resources</td>
<td>Neurologists act as coordinators of local network of providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited communication with family physicians</td>
<td>Environmental and Context Resources</td>
<td>Timely documentation on screening and treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited patients’ and family physicians’ knowledge on mood/anxiety issues in AOID</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Multimodal educational package</td>
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[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
Moving towards improvement in screening

• In Calgary, symptoms charted only for 20% of patients screened positive for depression/anxiety (in a research study – clinical screening is random)
• Only 31% received a management plan (>80% by family physicians)
• Under-detected without rigorous screening and, as a result, under-treated
• BDI-II and PHQ-9 highest sensitivity for depression
• BAI and STAI highest sensitivity for anxiety

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
5. Do you feel nervous, worried or frightened for no apparent reason?

6. Do you feel sad or depressed?

7. Do you suffer from loss of self-confidence due to stigma of visible (cervical) dystonia?

8. Do you have flat moods without the normal “highs” and “lows”?

9. Do you have difficulty while eating such as chewing or swallowing?

10. Do you experience unpleasant sensation such as numbness, tingling or pins and needles in the body area or nearby the body area of your dystonia?

11. Do you have any speech problems?

12. Does your dystonia affect your vision for instance when your head is turning to one side?

13. Do you suffer from pain (painful tension) of the body area or near to the body area of your dystonia (without any other condition in this body area that could cause the pain)?

14. Do you suffer from any walking difficulty or balance problem?
Reliability of DNMSQuest as a Screening Tool for Mood Disorders in Cervical Dystonia

88 CD patients, tested within 1 week of previous BoNT-A treatment

70% women and 52% men met criteria for mood disorder on ≥1 assessment tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment tool (total = 88)</th>
<th>Men (27)</th>
<th>Women (61)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAI ≥ 10</td>
<td>10 (37%)</td>
<td>30 (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDI ≥ 14</td>
<td>11 (41%)</td>
<td>24 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADS-A ≥ 8</td>
<td>9 (33%)</td>
<td>30 (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADS-D ≥ 8</td>
<td>9 (33%)</td>
<td>29 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADS-Total ≥ 16</td>
<td>10 (37%)</td>
<td>29 (48%)</td>
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</table>
Reliability of DNMSQuest as a Screening Tool for Mood Disorders in Cervical Dystonia

Shameer Rafiq, MRCPR, Ashokchand Nadkarni, MBBS, Sean D’Riordan, MD, FRCPI, and Michael Hutchinson, FRCP

CAVEATS:

❖ DNMSQuest cumulative score reflects the whole NMS spectrum

❖ BAI, BDI and HADS may not be equivalent in detecting anxiety/depression in CD (rigorous validation studies missing)
Depression and anxiety: recommendations for screening and management

• Survey development meeting
• Delphi survey: 41 expert professionals invited → 23 participated
• 14 F, 9 M
• Neurologists, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, family physicians and nurses
• Consensus meeting
PATIENT WITH DYSTONIA

Self rating OR Clinician rating
By Paper OR Secure digital platform

Screening for Depression and Anxiety Symptoms

Repeat periodic screening ≤6 months

NEGATIVE

[Martino et al., submitted 2022]
MEDICATIONS AND MOOD SYMPTOMS IN DYSTONIA

**BENZODIAZEPINES**

- Is the patient using benzodiazepines regularly? If yes,
- provide education on the risk of chronic benzodiazepine intake and assess the opportunity to initiate a slow taper. If necessary, refer to existing guidelines for safe benzodiazepine taper
- if the patient clearly reports having received benefit on motor symptoms from benzodiazepines, discuss -as needed- the opportunity of future use of benzodiazepines in short-term courses

**ANTICHOLINERGICS**

- Is the patient on anticholinergics, reporting benefit on motor symptoms? If yes,
- has there been a temporal relationship between anticholinergic initiation or dose increase and worsening of depressive or anxiety symptoms? If yes,
  - consider dosage adjustment or drug replacement
MEDICATIONS AND MOOD SYMPTOMS IN DYSTONIA

BACLOFEN

• Is the patient on baclofen, reporting benefit on motor symptoms? If yes,

• has there been a temporal relationship between baclofen initiation or dose increase and worsening of depressive or anxiety symptoms? If yes,
  – consider dosage adjustment or drug replacement

• does the patient have a history or alcohol (or other substance) use, or of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)? If yes,
  – refer to psychiatrist to assess whether these comorbidities are contributory to current depressive or anxiety symptoms, and whether baclofen therapy can be optimized (e.g. increase dosage -if appropriate- to improve mood symptoms in the context of substance abuse or PTSD; adjust dosage to minimize risk of hypomania)
MEDICATIONS AND MOOD SYMPTOMS IN DYSTONIA

ANTIDEPRESSANTS

• Is the patient on antidepressants with partial or insufficient control of depressive or anxiety symptoms? If yes,
  • consider change in dosage or change of agent within the same category or switching categories (e.g. from SSRI to NSRI)
  • consider referral to psychiatrist to adjust medications
• If the patient is not on antidepressants but there is indication to start treatment, has the patient been treated in the past with antidepressants? If yes,
  • did he experience worsening of dystonia or tremor while on antidepressants? If yes,
    – consider switching agent or category
  • is there a precedent or a risk for hypomania? If yes,
    – refer to psychiatrist before initiating treatment
DYSTONIA RESEARCH PROGRAM IN CALGARY

Local PI collaborators
➢ Dr. Tamara Pringsheim
➢ Dr. Zahra Goodarzi
➢ Dr. Justyna Sarna
➢ Dr. Brandy Callahan
➢ Dr. Giuseppe Iaria
➢ Dr. Scott Patten
➢ Dr. Daniel Kopala-Sibley
➢ Dr. Fiona Clement
➢ Dr. Khara Sauro
➢ Dr. Tolulope Sajobi
➢ Drs. Na Li and Meng Wang
➢ Dr. Zelma Kiss
➢ Dr. Bruce Pike
➢ Dr. Nicholas Strzalkowski
➢ Dr. Tyler Cluff

Coordinators and scientists
➢ Ms. Ela Nosrat
➢ Ms. Beatrice Anghelescu
➢ Ms. Yamile Jasaui
➢ Dr. Fil Cortese

Fellows and trainees
➢ Dr. Nicholas Cothros
➢ Dr. Alex Medina
➢ Ms. Rachel Sondergaard
➢ Ms. Eleanor Campbell
➢ Ms. Janet Adeoti
➢ Dr. Gabriel Amorelli
➢ Dr. Ali Abusrair
➢ Dr. Cinthia Terrobi-Chamba
➢ Dr. Conrad Rockel
➢ Ms. Baeleigh Van der Zweeg

International collaborators
➢ Dr. Laura Avanzino (Genova)
➢ Dr. Mark Edwards (SGUL, London)
➢ Dr. Francesca Morgante (SGUL, London)
➢ Dr. Christos Ganos (Charitè, Berlin)
➢ Dr. Lorena Fernandez de la Cruz and coll. (Karolinska, Stockholm)
➢ Dr. Hyder Jinnah (Atlanta)
➢ Dr. Joel Perlmutter (St. Louis)
➢ Dystonia Coalition