

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF SCHIZOPHRENIA IN RIGA CHILDREN'S CLINICAL UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL CHILD PSYCHIATRY CLINIC, 2012–2021

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Objectives. Early-onset schizophrenia (EOS) is a rare manifestation of the disorder, with the development of the first psychotic episode before 18 years. Numerous risk factors may interact with the genetic predisposition to mediate the timing of onset. This study aimed to collect epidemiological data on cases of EOS in Riga Children's Clinical University Hospital from 2012 to 2021, evaluate the incidence, and identify factors associated with the age of onset of EOS.

Materials and Methods. A retrospective study included patients admitted between January 2012 and December 2021 with a diagnosis of schizophrenia. The data were collected from medical records of Riga's Children's Clinical University Hospital; in-patient and out-patient contacts were explored. Data were analyzed using statistical software IBM SPSS 26, χ^2 tests, t-test, and ANOVA tests.

Results. During the analyzed period, 49 patients were diagnosed with EOS (19 females, 30 males) with a mean age of 14.83 (± 1.74). No significant difference in the age was found between the sexes. 83.7% of subjects presented with prodromal symptoms. Several factors that could potentially influence the age of onset were detected: emotional violence (in 42.8% of patients), obstetric complications (36.7%), a first-degree relative with schizophrenia (24.5%) or other mental disorder (34.7%), parents' divorce (42.8%), drug abuse (24.5%), premature birth (16.3%), birth by cesarean section (22.4%). Having a first-degree relative with psychotic-spectrum disorder showed a statistically significant association with the age of onset: 14.50 (± 1.71) vs. 14.95 (± 1.76) ($p = 0.021$), as well as obstetric complications 14.33 (± 1.43), 15.12 (± 1.61) ($p = 0.013$).

Conclusions. Considering the controversial data about the role of different factors in EOS manifestation, our data complement the mentioned discussion. The most frequently observed factors were emotional violence, obstetric complications, and a first-degree relative with other mental disorders. A relative with psychotic spectrum disorder and obstetric complications were associated with the age of onset of EOS.