

Comorbidity of generalized anxiety disorder and alcohol use disorders among individuals seeking outpatient substance abuse treatment.

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Short communication

Comorbidity of generalized anxiety disorder and alcohol use disorders among individuals seeking outpatient substance abuse treatment

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Abstract

The present study sought to address a gap in the literature by providing preliminary evidence of the prevalence and clinical characteristics of comorbid generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and alcohol use disorders (AUD) in a front-line outpatient substance abuse clinic. Of 39 outpatients meeting criteria for an AUD, nearly half (46%) also met criteria for current GAD. The onset of GAD occurred prior to AUD in 67% of comorbid cases, with an average time lag of 12.5 years among individuals with primary GAD.

Participants with comorbid GAD–AUD endorsed higher levels of worry severity and worry reduction alcohol consumption, and 55.6% of comorbid participants had a history

worry-reduction alcohol expectancies, and 55.6% of comorbid participants had a history of suicide attempts. Groups did not differ on anxiety sensitivity, social anxiety, or depression. Comorbid participants were more likely to indicate that worry interfered with their substance abuse treatment, and to indicate interest in concurrent treatment targeting their worry. Study findings provide initial evidence that GAD may be a prevalent and relevant factor among individuals with AUD seeking outpatient substance abuse treatment.



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Keywords

Generalized anxiety disorder; Alcohol use disorders; Comorbidity; Worry; Outpatient substance abuse treatment

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