

Alice in Wonderland Syndrome: assessment of public attitude to rare diseases

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Introduction

In current medicine there is a large variety of neurological disorders each of which has various pathological manifestations. We decided to focus on Alice in Wonderland syndrome since this phenomenon is rare and unusual as it is accompanied by a very characteristic violation of the perception of reality.

Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to investigate modern scientific and as well as fiction literature, to identify the percentage of people who suffer from this phenomenon, to promote self-education of rare psychological conditions and to focus on the coping strategies. We also aimed to provoke sympathy of common people to those with non-conventional diseases like the one we are studying.

Materials and methods

We studied literature on the topic to see any variants of the syndrome and their manifestations. Alice in Wonderland syndrome can manifest in two forms: macropsia and micropsia. Macropsia is a mental state in which objects seem to be much larger than they really are. This is a paroxysmal condition that can happen to a person unexpectedly. Micropsia or dwarf hallucinations are the exact opposite of a macropsia. The causes of this disease are divided into two types: disease states or the result of taking substances. The syndrome is so rare that only three hundred people suffer from it in the US according to statistics. The syndrome of Alice does not have any specific treatment. The patient should reduce the influence of stress factors and external stimuli and normalize sleep habits. We conducted a survey on this topic. It was important for us to know what people aged 18-45 knew about the phenomenon if they knew anything at all and whether it happened to them. The study involved 35 males and females.

Results

After processing the results we obtained the following data: 65% of the respondents aged 25-30 knew nothing about the syndrome although they showed readiness to study the topic. The respondents aged 18-25 expressed hesitations as to the entire existence of the syndrome. And only 11% of the respondents read about this phenomenon, although none of them encountered people suffering from it. 85% of the respondents felt sympathy for people suffering from the syndrome and considered they need a special approach. While 11% still hesitating didn't express any readiness to study the phenomenon at all and considered it was fake.

Conclusion

Nowadays science and technology is developing very rapidly and we hope that soon the syndrome will be treated. Relatives and friends of the patient should remember that their support is of particular importance.