

Elderly onset functional movement disorders: an overview from the Italian Registry of Functional Motor Disorders

*Petracca Martina*¹, C. Geroin², S. Di Tella³, A.R. Bentivoglio^{1,4}, A. Pilotto^{5,6}, F. Morgante^{7,8}, E. Marcuzzo², S. Cuoco⁹, R. Ceravolo¹⁰, S. Mazzucchi¹⁰, A. Padovani⁵, L.M. Romito¹¹, R. Eleopra¹¹, A. Nicoletti¹², C. Dallochio¹³, C. Arbasino¹³, F. Bono¹⁴, G. Magro¹⁴, B. Demartini¹⁵, O. Gambini¹⁵, N. Modugno¹⁶, E. Olivola¹⁶, L. Bonanni¹⁷, A. Albanese¹⁸, G. Ferrazzano¹⁹, A. Tessitore²⁰, L. Lopiano²¹, G. Calandra Buonauro^{22,23}, M. Esposito²⁴, A. Pisani^{25,26}, P. Manganotti²⁷, L. Tesolin²⁸, F. Teatini²⁸, G. Defazio²⁹, T. Ercoli²⁹, F. Stocchi³⁰, R. Erro⁹, M. Zappia^{1,2}, M. Tinazzi²

¹Movement Disorders Unit, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario A. Gemelli IRCCS, Rome, Italy

²Neurology Unit, Movement Disorders Division, Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, University of Verona, Verona, Italy

³Department of Psychology, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Italy

⁴Department of Neuroscience, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Rome, Italy

⁵Neurology Unit, Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences, University of Brescia, Brescia, Italy

⁶FERB Onlus, Ospedale S. Isidoro, Trescore Balneario, Bergamo, Italy

⁷Neurosciences Research Centre, Molecular and Clinical Sciences Neurosciences Research Centre, Molecular and Clinical Sciences Research Institute, St George's University of London, London, UK

⁸Department of Experimental and Clinical Medicine, University of Messina, Messina, Italy

⁹Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases (CEMAND), Department of Medicine, Surgery and Dentistry, Scuola Medica Salernitana, University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy

¹⁰Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases Parkinson and Movement Disorders, Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, University of Pisa, Pisa, Italy

¹¹Parkinson and Movement Disorders Unit, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Neurologico Carlo Besta, Milan, Italy

¹²Department G.F. Ingrassia, Section of Neurosciences, University of Catania, Catania, Italy

¹³Department of Medical Area, Neurology Unit, ASST Pavia, Pavia, Italy

¹⁴Botulinum Toxin Center, Neurology Unit A.O.U. Mater Domini, Catanzaro, Italy

¹⁵Aldo Ravelli Research Center for Neurotechnology and Experimental Brain Therapeutics, Department of Health Sciences, University of Milan, Milan, Italy

¹⁶IRCCS Neuromed, Pozzilli, Italy

¹⁷Department of Neuroscience, Imaging and Clinical Sciences, University G. D'Annunzio, Chieti-Pescara, Italy

¹⁸ Department of Neurology, IRCCS Humanitas Research Hospital, Rozzano Milan, Italy

¹⁹ Department of Human Neurosciences, Università La Sapienza, Rome, Italy

²⁰ Department of Advanced Medical and Surgery Sciences, University of Campania - Luigi Vanvitelli, Naples, Italy

²¹ Department of Neuroscience - Rita Levi Montalcini, University of Turin, Turin, Italy

²² Department of Biomedical and Neuromotor Sciences, University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy

²³ IRCCS Istituto delle Scienze Neurologiche di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

²⁴ Clinical Neurophysiology Unit, Cardarelli Hospital, Naples, Italy

²⁵ IRCCS Mondino Foundation, Pavia, Italy

²⁶Department of Brain and Behavioral Sciences, University of Pavia, Pavia, Italy

²⁷Clinical Neurology Unit, Department of Medical, Surgical and Health Services, University of Trieste, Trieste, Italy

²⁸Functional Movement Disorders Outpt. Clinic, Clinical Neurology and Stroke Unit Dep., Central Country Hospital, Bolzano, Italy

²⁹Department of Medical Sciences and Public Health, University of Cagliari, Cagliari, Italy

³⁰University and Institute of Research and Medical Care San Raffaele Roma, Rome, Italy

Introduction: Functional movement disorders (FMDs) are a frequent condition that affects patients with movement disorder. Generally described in young adults, their manifestation can be also associated to an elderly onset [1-2].

Objective: Aim of this study is to assess the prevalence and the clinical phenotype of elderly onset FMDs and to compare this sample to younger onset patients in order to investigate the possible risk factors.

Methods: We recruited patients with a clinically definite diagnosis of FMDs from the Italian Registry of Functional Motor Disorders. For each patient, we performed an extensive clinical assessment. For elderly onset, we set a chronological cut-off at 65 years or older. Multivariate regression models were implemented in order to estimate the adjusted odds ratio (OR; 95% confidence interval) of having an elderly onset FMDs related to socio-demographic and clinical characteristics.

Results: Out of 410 FMDs patients, 9% (n =34) had an elderly FMDs onset, with a mean age at onset of 70.9 years. They exhibited isolated FMD in 67.7%. The most frequent phenotype was tremor in 47.1%, followed by gait disorders, weakness, dystonia, jerks, parkinsonism and facial motor disorder. On multivariate regression analysis, elderly onset FMDs was more likely associated with comorbidities, in particular parkinsonism (OR 6.48, 95% CI 1.32–31.78, p= .021), cerebrovascular diseases (OR 4.64, 95% CI 1.15–18.68, p= .031), and hypertension (OR 5.15, 95% CI 2.12-12.49, p < .001). Elderly onset FMDs were also less likely to have fatigue as associated non-motor symptoms (OR 0.34, 95% CI 0.13-0.91, p = .031).

Conclusions: In line with literature data, the most frequent clinical phenotypes of elderly onset FMDs was tremor [1-2]. People with elderly onset FMDs may present with cerebrovascular and cardiovascular comorbidities and overlapping neurological conditions, i.e. parkinsonism [3]. This complexity unveils the frequent difficulty of FMDs diagnosis in elderly ages.

References:

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