

Poster

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Poster 37

[P-37-02] Differentiating Non-Suicidal Self-Injury from Suicide Attempts in Patients Presenting to the Emergency Department

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Keywords : Non-suicidal self-injury, Suicide attempt, Risk factors

Objectives: Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) and suicide attempts (SA) are distinct yet overlapping behaviors. This study aimed to identify demographic, clinical, and behavioral differences between individuals presenting with NSSI and those with SA.

Methods: A total of 357 patients presenting with self-harm to an emergency department were categorized into an NSSI group ($n=61$) and an SA group ($n=296$). Demographic, clinical, and behavioral characteristics were compared between the two groups.

Results: The NSSI group was significantly younger (25.7 ± 12.9 vs. 44.3 ± 19.8 years, $p < 0.001$), with higher proportions of females ($p = 0.05$) and employed individuals ($p < 0.005$). The SA group had higher rates of medical illness ($p < 0.01$), hopelessness ($p < 0.001$), and severe depression ($p < 0.001$). SA patients also exhibited more persistent suicidal ideation ($p < 0.005$), greater medical severity, higher lethality of methods, and higher risk scores (*all* $p < 0.001$). Conversely, the NSSI group showed more repeated self-injury ($p < 0.001$), greater use of cutting ($p < 0.001$), and exclusively impulsive, unplanned acts without suicide notes ($p < 0.01$). Financial and other stressors were more common in the SA group.

Conclusions: NSSI and SA patients differ markedly in age, intent, method, and clinical severity. NSSI is more common in younger, female patients and characterized by impulsive, low-lethality behavior. SA is associated with more serious psychopathology, planning, and high-lethality methods. These findings underscore the need for differentiated assessment and tailored interventions in emergency settings.