Effects of hearing aids on cognitive functions and depressive signs in elderly people

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Abstract: With the physical, emotional and cognitive effects of senility, elderly people, especially those with impaired hearing, need rehabilitation for improving their life conditions. Hearing aids are frequently used to improve their daily life communications and activities. The aim of this study was to report the cognitive and psychological benefits of using hearing aids by the elderly people, over the age of 65. This was a prospective, single-arm interventional study in 34 elderly subjects with hearing impairment who answered the geriatric depression scale-short form (GDS) questionnaire and the mini mental state examination (MMSE) test, prior to, and 3 months following the use of hearing aid, after obtaining the patients’ consent to participate in study. Patients with evidence of focal neurological loss with clinical examination, a confusional state, sudden hear loss and severe tinnitus were not included in the study. Scores of the effects of hearing aids on mood and cognitive functions were compared for each subject, before and after, and between males and females. After 3 months of using a hearing aid, all patients showed a significant improvement of the psychosocial and cognitive conditions, and all of them showed betterment of their problems, i.e., the social communication and exchanging information. In conclusion, for the elderly people with the effects of hearing aids in presbycusis and due to the significant improvement in psychological state and mental functions, using and being adaptable to hearing aids is a good solution. © 2010 Elsevier Ireland Ltd.

Author Keywords: Geriatric depression scale (GDS); Hearing aid in elderly; Mini mental state examination (MMSE); Psychocognitive functions; Treatment of presbycusis

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