

Abstract

Functional Movement Disorders (FMD), also known as conversion, psychogenic, or dissociative motor disorders, are complex and clinically heterogeneous group of diseases. In addition to motor symptoms, FMD are manifested by a number of comorbid non-motor symptoms. Despite the potential reversibility, these disorders still have an unfavourable prognosis and are associated with a low quality of life. Regardless of the growing interest of both clinical and research communities over the last two decades, this issue remains insufficiently understood in many aspects. The aim of the presented studies was to fill some gaps in the knowledge of neurophysiological and clinical correlates in FMD. The first of the presented studies explored the robust neurophysiological phenomenon of prepulse inhibition (PPI) in FMD. The alteration in PPI, along with previous findings of a reduced PPI in other functional syndromes, supported a possible unified pathophysiology across functional neurological and somatic syndromes with implications for diagnostic classification and development of novel biomarkers and treatments. These results are in line with the differentiation FMD from feigned or malingered phenomena. The aim of the second study was to explore the relationship between common motor, non-motor symptoms and health-related quality of life in a large cohort of patients with FMD. To understand the clinical heterogeneity, cluster analysis was used to search for subgroups within the cohort. We interpreted the lack of evidence of clusters along with a high degree of correlation between domains. Our results support the unification of functional and somatic syndromes in classification schemes.

Key words: biomarkers, functional movement disorders, neurophysiology, non-motor symptoms, prepulse inhibition