The Edinburgh cognitive and behavioral amyotrophic lateral sclerosis screen (ECAS): sensitivity in differentiating between ALS and Alzheimer's disease in a Greek population

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Differentiation of ALS cognitive impairment from Alzheimer's disease.

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What is it about?

ALS may affect old individuals while the lack of adjustments of cognitive screens to motor disabilities may lead to false diagnosis of diseases common in older people such as Alzheimer's Disease. We have used Edinburgh Cognitive and Behavioural Screen (ECAS) in attempt to differentiate ALS from Alzheimer's Disease.

Why is it important?

Individuals with ALS frequently present cognitive impairments and behavioural changes. However, the neuropsychological tests are not adjusted to the motor disabilities common to ALS. Keeping in mind that ALS may affect old individuals, the lack of adjustments to motor disabilities may lead to false positive diagnosis of cognitive impairment and/or disease (e.g., Alzheimer's Disease). In this study, we have used the Edinburgh Cognitive and Behavioural Screen (ECAS) which has a

section specific to the cognitive and behavioural symptomatology common in ALS, as well as a section specific to the cognitive impairments common to Alzheimer's Disease. By using the ECAS, we have shown that we can detect Alzheimer's Disease and differentiate the types of cognitive impairment from those typically found in ALS.

The ECAS may therefore help in the diagnosis of this type of dementia in individuals with motor disabilities.

Perspectives

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I believe that this study has a great clinical value. Nowadays, unfortunately, motor disabilities and diseases like Alzheimer's disease are highly prevalent. ECAS may help with the early and valid diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease.

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