

Spectrum of Neuropathic Pain in Myanmar

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Neuropathic pain is one of the common syndromes attending neurology clinics. Although it is increasingly well recognized that neuropathic pain is one of the most important symptoms, it remains under diagnosed and undertreated in developing countries. Myanmar is a large country with total population of 54,133,137 in 2019. In 2018, among 265 patients attending to pain clinic in Yangon, 9% were found to have neuropathic pain. It is significant and clinical data on neuropathic pain in Myanmar is still scarce. So, short cross-sectional survey was carried out at Neurology and Rehabilitation out-patient clinics of two teaching hospitals in Yangon for one month (January 1- 31, 2019). It included 146 patients with neuropathic pain defined by interviewing with DN4 questionnaire. This study described five main clinical symptoms, types, causes and prescribed medications. 25.3% were new cases. The most frequent age group was 41 - 60 years (48.6%) with the mean age of 52.7 ± 14.5 years. The male to female ratio was 1: 1.3. Central and peripheral neuropathic pain constituted 24.7% and 75.3% respectively. The commonest pain problem was radiculopathy (26%) followed by cerebral post stroke pain (11.7%) and diabetic peripheral neuropathy (9.6%). Five main clinical symptoms were tingling (84.4%), numbness (63.9%), pins and needles (40.2%), burning (36.1%) and electric shock like sensation (31.1%). The most commonly prescribed medication was pregabalin (49.3%) followed by gabapentin (28.8%). Maximum dosage of Pregabalin & Gabapentin to achieve pain relief by 80-100% were 300 mg & 900 mg respectively. Conclusion: Spectrum of Myanmar patients with neuropathic pain was not different from that of ASEAN population. It is crucial to recognize and treat the neuropathic pain in our daily clinical practice to improve the patients' quality of life.