Hyperfamiliarity in Dementia and Mild Cognitive Impairment
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Abstract

Introduction: Hyperfamiliarity, a phenomenon in which feelings of familiarity are evoked by novel stimuli, is well described in epilepsy and the lesioned brain. Abnormality of familiarity in Alzheimer’s disease (AD) and mild cognitive impairment (MCI) have also been described in the literature, but more from a neuropsychological approach perspective. Currently, there is a lack of study on the real-life experience of familiarity abnormality in dementia and MCI. Our aim was to compare the occurrence of hyperfamiliarity among dementia and MCI. Materials and Methods: We recruited 73 participants, 29 with AD, 10 with vascular dementia, 7 with MCI and 27 healthy controls, and administered a questionnaire to assess hyperfamiliarity frequency. Results: Hyperfamiliarity was observed in real-life in cognitive impairment, but was unrelated to its severity or underlying aetiology. Conclusion: This study highlights the similar rate of occurrence of hyperfamiliarity in the daily life of individuals with cognitive impairment. Future research should examine neuropsychological correlations and mechanisms that contribute to such observations.

Key words: Alzheimer’s disease, Delusional misidentification syndrome, Vascular dementia

Ann Acad Med Singapore 2015;44:342-9

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