Abstract

Background: Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is the most common gynaecological endocrine disorder affecting women of reproductive age. Overseas studies reported that women with PCOS suffer from a lower quality of life and higher rates of depressive and anxiety symptoms. However, little is known about the psychiatric morbidity among local Chinese women with PCOS.

Objectives: To determine the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity, identify its correlates and evaluate the effectiveness of the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) and the 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) as screening tools for psychiatric morbidity in Chinese women with PCOS.

Methods: This cross-sectional study recruited 148 consecutive patients with PCOS from a local tertiary gynaecology clinic from July 2014 to March 2015. Socio-demographic and clinical factors were recorded. The HADS and GHQ-12 were administered. Psychiatric diagnoses were established by the Chinese-bilingual Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Axis I Disorders, Patient Research Version (CB-SCID-I/P). The results of HADS and GHQ-12 were compared against the psychiatric diagnoses generated from CB-SCID-I/P.

Results: The point prevalence of current overall psychiatric disorders, depressive disorders and anxiety disorders were 30.4%, 18.2% and 14.2% respectively. Major depressive disorder was the most common mood disorder, while generalised anxiety disorder was the most common anxiety disorder. Subjective report of acne and higher body mass index were associated with current overall psychiatric and depressive disorders. Irregular menstrual cycle was associated with current overall psychiatric and anxiety disorders. Lower education level and family history of mental illness were associated with current overall psychiatric disorders. Past history of mental illness was associated with current depressive disorders. Both HADS and GHQ-12 were effective as screening tools for current

psychiatric, depressive and anxiety disorders, but HADS showed better performance. The cut-off points of HADS total score for current psychiatric, depressive and anxiety disorders were 9/10, 11/12 and 10/11 respectively.

Conclusion: Psychiatric disorders are common in Chinese women with PCOS. Factors that were associated with psychiatric morbidity were identified. HADS performed well as a screening tool for identification of patients who are at risk of developing psychiatric disorders.