Cognitive stimulation and occupational therapy for delirium prevention

Estimulação cognitiva e terapia ocupacional para prevenção de delirium

INTRODUCTION

Intensive care unit (ICU) delirium is a relevant condition for intensive care patients and professionals. This complication is relevant due to its high incidence and its potential to affect patient outcomes in the short and long term.\textsuperscript{[1,2]} Different pharmacological and non-pharmacological strategies have been evaluated for the prevention and treatment of ICU delirium, with heterogeneous results to date.\textsuperscript{[3,4]} New strategies to limit the impact of this condition are necessary despite advances in the field.\textsuperscript{[5]}

Recently, some studies have explored the role of occupational therapy (OT) in the ICU alone or more frequently as part of the rehabilitation team.\textsuperscript{[6,7]} Some of these studies have explored delirium as a principal or secondary outcome. In view of these recent studies, our objective was to review the literature exploring the role of OT in the ICU, particularly in the area of delirium prevention.

Key concepts in occupational therapy

According to the World Federation of Occupational Therapy (www.wfot.org), OT is the art and science of enabling engagement in everyday living through occupation. The primary goal of OT is to enable people to participate in the Activities of Daily Living (ADL). Occupational therapy interventions directly affect the person via sensorial, motor or cognitive interventions and/or the environment with physical and social interventions. These interventions

ABSTRACT

Delirium is a relevant condition in critically ill patients with long-term impacts on mortality, cognitive and functional status and quality of life. Despite the progress in its diagnosis, prevention and management during the last years, its impact persists being relevant, so new preventive and therapeutic strategies need to be explored. Among non-pharmacologic preventive strategies, recent reports suggest a role for occupational therapy through a series of interventions that may impact the development of delirium. The aim of this review is to evaluate the studies evaluating the role of occupational therapy in the prevention of delirium in critically ill patient populations, and suggests perspectives to future research in this area.

Keywords: Delirium/prevention & control; Occupational therapy

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