Letter by Martínez-Sellés Regarding Article, “Risk of Acute Myocardial Infarction After the Death of a Significant Person in One’s Life: The Determinants of Myocardial Infarction Onset Study”

To the Editor:

We read with interest the article by Mostofsky et al.1 The authors state that grief over the death of a significant person was associated with an acutely increased risk of myocardial infarction in the subsequent days. However, this conclusion is based on the data of the Determinants of Myocardial Infarction Onset (MIOS) Study, performed before the description of stress cardiomyopathy (also known as takotsubo cardiomyopathy).2 Stress cardiomyopathy is a transient form of acute heart failure triggered by stressful events that mimics acute myocardial infarction and has a clear female predominance.2,3 Death/funeral of a family member is the most frequently described trigger of this disease,2 and angiographic data were not available in the MIOS Study. In our opinion, it is conceivable that a large proportion of patients with takotsubo cardiomyopathy, triggered by a recent death of a significant person, were wrongly classified as having an acute myocardial infarction. This is probably more marked in the first 24 hours after the death of a family member, and it explains the high proportion of women (78%) among patients with acute myocardial infarction diagnosis within the first day of the death of a significant person. Mostofsky et al have clearly shown that the death of a significant person is associated with an acutely increased risk of cardiac events in the subsequent days; however, the ultimate link between spousal bereavement and increased risk of mortality still needs further research.

Disclosures

None.

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References

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Circulation. 2012;126:e36
doi: 10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.112.094581

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