Measurement of heart rate variability and cognitive abilities based on attachment styles in children with chronic medical conditions

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Recognizing the biopsychosocial dimensions of chronic medical conditions in children and preparing them to adapt to medical processes is one of the most significant issues in the field of health psychology. The aim of this study was to measure heart rate variability and cognitive abilities based on attachment style in children with chronic medical conditions. To this end, 45 children aged 12-15 years who had received a diagnosis of a chronic medical disease and were matched with the inclusion/exclusion criteria, were entered the study using available sampling method. These children were assigned to three groups of secure, avoidance and anxiety attachment style based on the Collins and Reid Attachment Scale. These groups had been demographically homogeneous. Then heart rate variability and cognitive abilities were measured. One-way ANOVA results showed a significant difference between the three groups in the heart rate variability and cognitive abilities. Post hoc test showed that children with secure attachment style had higher efficiency in heart rate variability and cognitive abilities. These results indicate that attachment style is one of the factors influencing the health status of children with chronic medical illness. These findings highlight the importance of paying attention to psychological factors, especially attachment and its role in the health status of children with chronic medical conditions.