Koro or Body Dysmorphic Disorder? A case report in a patomorfic continuum
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Background:
Human sexuality is a complex experience influenced by biological, psychological and social elements. Cultural factors and the social context contribute to the individual's sexual desires and behaviours, as well as to the expression of singular abnormalities in the sexual life.

Koro syndrome is characterised by intense and sudden anxiety originated from the patient's worry his own penis may retreat into his body. This clinical condition shares common features with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), such as anxiety linked to the patient's body part. Sometimes, both of them may also pass over into transient psychotic states. An accurate diagnosis process is needed to differentiate between the two, since worries for the penis may be present also in the BDD.

Methods:
We report the clinical case of a patient who referred to the Psychiatric Clinic in Trieste because of significant anxiety that his flaccid penis may “become so small that it would disappear”. Though at the first consultation we were inclined to a diagnosis of BDD, collecting his medical history during the following meetings we found out new bizarre thoughts. We supported the clinical evaluation with psychometric tests, such as the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-II (MCMI-II) and the Body Uneasiness Test (BUT).

Results:
MCMI-II and BUT scored for an immature and narcissistic personality, with no evidence of psychotic disorder.

Conclusion:
A patomorfic continuum between Koro syndrome and BDD can be inferred, though differences in cultural factors and anxiety level suggest to separate the two.