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POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

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What are group therapies?

Group therapy refers to any psychosocial therapy that is administered in a group setting. Group therapy offers the opportunity to redevelop trusting relationships, and a sense of interpersonal safety. The experience that others share similar problems helps to validate traumatic experiences and to normalise trauma responses. Trauma-focused groups integrate memories of the trauma into the therapeutic process to modify the meaning of the trauma for the individual, while non-trauma-focused groups concentrate more on the impact of the trauma on current life issues and behaviours.

What is the evidence for group therapies for PTSD?

Moderate quality evidence found medium-sized improvements in PTSD, anxiety, and depression symptoms following group therapy (mostly cognitive behavioural therapy) compared to no treatment. This effect was slightly reduced but maintained for up to 6 months post-treatment. There was also more remission with group therapy compared to no treatment. Females and non-combat trauma samples showed the largest improvements following group therapy.

There were no differences in PTSD symptoms when group therapy was compared to non-group active treatments or when group therapy plus trauma exposure therapy was compared to group therapy alone.

For more information see the technical table

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

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NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.

Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.

Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.

While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about PTSD and its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.