



NeuRA

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POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

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What is imagery rehearsal therapy?

Imagery rehearsal therapy is a commonly used cognitive-behavioural intervention for post-traumatic nightmares. The basic components include sleep education, a dream narrative that includes a change to some aspect of the nightmare, and imaginal rehearsal of the new dream narrative. Some imagery rehearsal therapies also include exposure components, such as reading the written account aloud to the therapist and/or therapy group members. Some also include components of cognitive-behavioural therapy such as sleep restriction, stimulus control, and sleep hygiene.

What is the evidence for imagery rehearsal therapy?

Moderate quality evidence found medium to large effects of reduced PTSD symptom severity, nightmares, and increased sleep quality following imagery rehearsal therapy. These effects remained for 6 to 12 months following treatment. Samples treated with cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia plus imagery rehearsal therapy reported more improvement in sleep quality, but not nightmare frequency or PTSD symptoms, than samples treated with imagery rehearsal therapy alone. Civilian samples reported more improvement in sleep quality than veteran samples.

For more information see the technical table



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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.

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

We are able to make significant advances due to the generosity of countless people. Your donation allows us to continue to work towards transforming lives. For information on how you can support our research, phone **1300 888 019** or make a secure donation at neura.edu.au/donate

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