



C O M M U N I C A T I O N

## POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

August 2021

### How is language ability related to PTSD?

Language may be altered in people with PTSD. Tasks designed to assess language ability include letter fluency tasks that assess the ability to generate words starting with letter and category fluency tasks that assess the ability to name words within a specified category. Working memory is needed for both letter and category fluency as participants must organise and retrieve relevant information.

Other tests designed to assess language include: Boston Naming task; Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) comprehension (including the subtest information, similarities and vocabulary), WAIS verbal memory, verbal fluency, National Adult Reading Test (NART)/ Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), Controlled Oral Word Association Test (COWA), Category Instance Generation Test (CIGT), Multiple Choice Vocabulary Test (MWT-B), Hopkins Verbal Learning Test (HVLT), California Verbal Learning Test (CVLT), Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test (AVLT), semantic priming tasks and Lexical Decision Task and the Peabody Individual Achievement reading comprehension (PIAT). Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) is used to determine the degree of incoherence in language.

### What is the evidence for language in people with PTSD?

Moderate to low quality evidence finds medium-sized effects showing children and adults with PTSD had poorer language ability than controls, however there were no differences in older adults over 65 years.

**For more information see the technical table**



*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

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