



POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

August 2021

How is treatment non-adherence related to PTSD?

Non-adherence to treatments reduces the success of the treatment regimen and the ability to achieve remission from illness. Greater adherence to treatments can contribute to more successful management of the symptoms of PTSD and subsequent better quality of life. It also improves attitudes towards treatment, as well as increasing insight and confidence.

What is the evidence for treatment non-adherence in people with PTSD?

Moderate to high quality evidence found a dropout rate of around 18-21% from psychological treatments for PTSD. Rates were highest in longer studies with more sessions, and in group treatments rather than individual treatments. Cognitive behavioural therapy had significantly more dropouts than applied relaxation, cognitive therapy, integrative approaches, and supportive psychotherapy. Exposure therapy had significantly more dropouts than supportive psychotherapy. Cognitive processing and eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing showed similar rates to the overall rate.

There was a small effect of more medication non-adherence for physical conditions (HIV, myocardial infarction, organ transplant, stroke, cardiovascular disease, and hypertension) in people with PTSD compared to people without PTSD. Non-adherence rates were higher in people whose PTSD was induced by a medical event than by other events. Non-adherence rates were higher in people with vascular disease, and lower in people with HIV, than other conditions.

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.