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POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER Factsheet

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What is chronic pain and fibromyalgia?

Pain complaints are common in trauma patients, with greater frequency or severity of overall pain reported when compared to people without PTSD. Fibromyalgia is commonly reported, which is a centralised pain syndrome characterised by the presence of chronic widespread pain in association with fatigue, sleep disturbances, and cognitive dysfunction.

This topic assesses rates of chronic pain and fibromyalgia in people with PTSD. Please also see the illness topic that assesses pain as a risk factor for PTSD.

What is the evidence for chronic pain in people with PTSD?

Moderate to high quality evidence finds a small association between increased PTSD symptoms and increased chronic widespread pain. Moderate to low quality evidence found evidence of bidirectional associations between pain and PTSD symptoms within six months post-trauma, whereas unidirectional patterns were found after six months, either from pain to PTSD symptoms or from PTSD symptoms to pain.

Moderate to low quality evidence finds medium-sized effects of increased rates of fibromyalgia and chronic widespread pain in people previously exposed to trauma, regardless of PTSD diagnosis.

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

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