



# Brief Trauma-focused Therapy for Co-morbid Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Low Back Pain – preliminary results.

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## Background

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and chronic pain often co-occur and higher levels of pain and disability are found in patients with low back pain (LBP) and co-morbid PTSD. PTSD and pain are mutually maintained, why both conditions may need to be targeted for successful outcome.

## Aim & Methods

1. To assess the prevalence and impact of PTSD on LBP pain and disability .
2. To investigate the effectiveness of additional brief trauma-focused therapy for PTSD, pain and disability compared to treatment-as-usual (TAU).

- A one-year cohort of consecutive patients with LBP referred to the Spine Center was screened for PTSD.
- Patients fulfilling the DSM-IV criteria for PTSD or subclinical PTSD where randomised to either TAU or TAU + brief trauma-focused psychotherapy (6-10 sessions).

## Results

In total, 27.6% had experienced a traumatic event and 9% had clinical or sub-clinical PTSD. Patients with PTSD suffered from significantly higher levels of pain (NRS)  $d = 0.19$ ,  $p < .01$ , lower levels of physical functioning (Roland Morris)  $d = 0.20$ ,  $p < .01$ , and health related quality of life (HRQOL)  $d = 0.21$ ,  $p < .01$ .

## Conclusion

Follow-up data are still collected. Hence, the results are only preliminary. However, the results are promising for brief trauma-focused therapy for patients with LBP and co-morbid PTSD.

