

**Results:** From a total 127 studies, we included 22 studies that met our criteria in our narrative review. Depending on the tool used and the type of population studied, the prevalence of general anxiety disorders varied between 20% and 49.5% while prevalence of depressive disorders ranged between 20.4% and 53.8%. Younger people, health care workers, those who had to give up physical activity, people who had lost income, those who lived alone, infected by COVID-19, or had a higher perceived risk of the disease had a higher prevalence of both anxiety and depression disorders during the pandemic. There was conflicting evidence on prevalence levels among men and women and on whether they had children or not.

**Conclusions:** COVID-19 has had a profound effect on the mental health of the Irish population. Some population groups are more affected than the others. Addressing mental health concerns of Irish population during and post pandemic should remain as one of the top public health priorities.

**Disclosure:** No significant relationships.

**Keywords:** pandemic; Coronavirus; lockdown; mental health

## O0003

### The effect of contamination disgust on Covid-19-related anxiety

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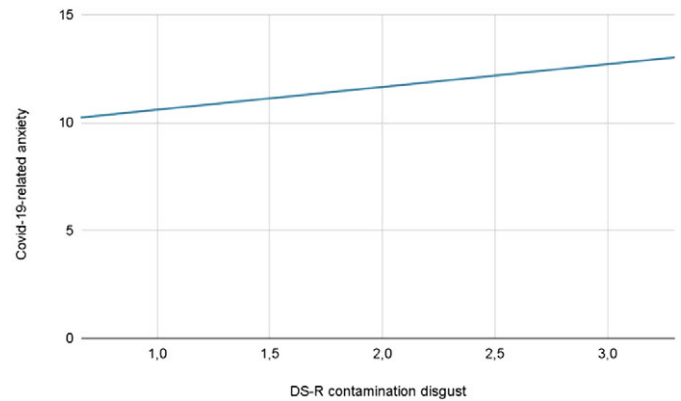
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**Introduction:** It is proven that high levels of disgust contribute to implementing protective behaviors. Investigators also discovered that the emotion of disgust plays a central role in determining anxiety related to the contraction of COVID-19. Few data are available about the role of the contamination disgust, a specific disgust domain, in this relationship.

**Objectives:** The effect of contamination disgust on COVID-19-related anxiety was investigated.

**Methods:** 295 healthy subjects were enrolled through an online survey. They completed Disgust Scale-Revised (DS-R) and were asked to estimate their levels of Covid-19-related anxiety in 12 proposed situations. A total score was then calculated. An ANOVA model having Covid-19-related anxiety total score as dependent variable, and DS-R contamination disgust, age, and sex as predictors was estimated.

**Results:** The overall model was significant ( $F(3,291)=6.402$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and explained 6.2% of total Covid-19 anxiety variance ( $R^2 = 0.062$ ). The effect of DS-R contamination disgust on Covid-19-related anxiety was positive, significant ( $B=0.974$ ,  $t(291)=3.227$ ,  $p=0.001$ ) and explained 3.5% of Covid-19-related anxiety variance (partial  $\eta^2=0.035$ ). A significant effect of sex was detected ( $F(1,291)=4.919$ ,  $p=0.027$ ), with females having higher Covid-19-related anxiety than males, while no effect was detected for age ( $B=-0.024$ ,  $t(291)=-0.884$ ,  $p=0.377$ ).



**Conclusions:** The presented data provide preliminary evidence for an effect of contamination disgust on Covid-19-related anxiety.

**Disclosure:** No significant relationships.

**Keywords:** Covid-19; contamination disgust; Anxiety; Covid-19-related anxiety

## O0004

### A Network Analysis Study Investigating Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Dissociation Comorbidity in a UK Armed Forces Veteran Sample

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**Introduction:** An established body of literature has identified that PTSD and dissociation are comorbid. Furthermore, the DSM introduced a dissociative subtype of PTSD into their most recent update; DSM-5.

**Objectives:** The current study aimed to examine symptom-level associations between PTSD and dissociation using network analysis among UK Armed Forces veterans resident in Northern Ireland (NI) to identify if there are certain symptoms that may act as bridges between the two constructs.

**Methods:** A large scale cross sectional survey was conducted examining the physical and mental wellbeing of UK Armed Forces Veterans living in NI. The total eligible sample size was 619 (89.8% male), with a mean age of 55.38 years ( $SD = 10.41$ ). Two networks were estimated, (1) a network consisting of 20 DSM-5 PTSD items and (2) a network consisting of 20 PTSD items and four dissociative items. Expected influence bridge centrality was calculated to examine symptoms with the most/strongest cross-domain associations (i.e. between PTSD and dissociation). The presence of meaningful clustering among symptoms was also explored.

**Results:** The PTSD symptoms 'concentration problems', 'flashbacks' and 'negative emotional state' had the highest relative bridge expected influence centrality. Of the four dissociative items, 'gaps in awareness' had the highest relative bridge expected influence centrality, followed by 'cognitive-behavioural re-experiencing'. A community structure of five clusters was detected. Four clusters reflected each subscale of the PCL-5 PTSD items and the final cluster reflected the dissociation items.

**Conclusions:** This study extends our understanding of PTSD and dissociation comorbidity by investigating symptom level relationships; potentially informing future treatments and interventions.

**Disclosure:** No significant relationships.

**Keywords:** Network Analysis; comorbidity; PTSD; Dissociation

O0005

### The role of PACAP/PAC1R in PTSD: effects on fear extinction via the ventromedial hypothalamus

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**Introduction:** The incidence and severity of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is higher in women than men because of environmental and biological factors. Specific mechanisms in the PACAP-PAC1R (pituitary adenylate cyclase-activating polypeptide and its type I receptor) system may confer PTSD risk in women. Interestingly, while the PACAP (*ADCYAP1*) - PAC1R (*ADCYAP1R1*) system is expressed highly in the hypothalamus, no relationship has been described for this pathway in the hypothalamus with fear processing or in PTSD.

**Objectives:** We studied whether the estrous/menstrual cycle at the moment of trauma predicts PTSD and the involvement of the PACAP neurons in the amygdala and hypothalamus during traumatic stress.

**Methods:** Mice: DREADDs, immunohistochemistry and behavior. Humans: fear-potentiated startle and questionnaires.

**Results:** Here, we show that acute stress immobilization (IMO) produces fear extinction impairments in female mice. Also, IMO elicits *Adcyap1* and *Adcyap1r1* mRNA upregulation in the hypothalamus, PACAP/c-Fos downregulation in the medial amygdala (MeA), and PACAP/FosB/ $\Delta$ FosB upregulation in the ventromedial hypothalamus dorsomedial part (VMHdm) after fear extinction. We also found that women with the risk genotype of *ADCYAP1R1* rs2267735 SNP show impaired fear extinction. In mice, DREADD-mediated inhibition of the MeA neurons projecting to the VMHdm during IMO rescues both PACAP upregulation in VMHdm and the fear extinction impairment. We ruled out contributions from inherent hormonal states showing that the menstrual or estrous cycle phase at the moment of trauma does not result in a vulnerable phenotype.

**Conclusions:** Our data suggest that the PACAP-PAC1R hypothalamic system may be a novel candidate to treat and prevent PTSD symptoms including fear dysregulations.

**Disclosure:** No significant relationships.

**Keywords:** translational; human; mouse; Stress

O0006

### Causal determinants of complex PTSD in Syrian refugee children living in informal settlements in Lebanon

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**Introduction:** Displaced refugee children with a history of war exposure are at risk of developing complex and severe forms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

**Objectives:** Search for the most relevant causal predictors of complex PTSD in a prospective cohort of Syrian refugee children living in informal settlements in Lebanon (N=1007).

**Methods:** A latent class unsupervised analysis was carried out to determine clusters with complex PTSD presentation at the follow-up assessment. A new exploratory causal discovering modelling approach was applied using 97 multilevel psychosocial variables as predictors (Biazoli et al., 2021). Associations between discovered candidate causal factors assessed at baseline with a presumed diagnosis of complex PTSD one year later were calculated using a multiple logistic regression model.

**Results:** Several putative causal factors emerged: perceived social coherence of the neighbourhood (Positive Predictive Value increase: 1.22); impulsivity (1.25), self-efficacy (1.23) and depressive symptoms (1.15) at the parental level; positive home experiences (1.16) at the family level; and child-level factors such as being forced to work (1.22), being a victim of verbal or physical bullying (1.19), loneliness (1.17) and well-being (1.18). In further confirmatory multiple logistic regression analysis and after correction for multiple comparisons, verbal or physical bullying victimization ( $p=.005$ ) and caregiver depressive symptoms ( $p=.0004$ ) at baseline were associated with complex PTSD presentations one year later.

**Conclusions:** Our results support the need for a multi-level psychosocial care model to prevent psychological distress and promote mental health in refugee children. Specifically, our results suggest that programs tackling caregiver's mental health and children's exposure to violence might effectively prevent complex PTSD.

**Disclosure:** No significant relationships.

**Keywords:** Social Determinants; causal inference; PTSD

O0007

### PTSD symptoms and coping before and during COVID-19 pandemic among help-seeking veterans: prospective cohort study

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**Introduction:** The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the mental health of individuals around the world. Ex-combatants have been repeatedly shown to be increased risk of experiencing social and psychological problems during emergencies.

**Objectives:** To compare the severity of overall posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms and PTSD clusters among help-seeking veterans before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The second aim was to identify coping strategies used and track possible changes during the timeline.

**Methods:** Male war veterans receiving outpatient treatment at the Referral Center for PTSD were assessed at baseline (t1=12-18