



The role of pain catastrophizing in cognitive functioning among veterans with history of mild traumatic brain injury

Purpose

To look at how pain catastrophizing (PC) may be related to neuropsychological functioning in Veterans with mTBIs.

Participants

Veterans (n=39) from Iraq and Afghanistan combat zones with history of mTBI. They were recruited from the Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System.

How was the study conducted?

mTBI history was collected through clinical interviews, which also screened for psychiatric disorders using the Mini-International Neuropsychiatric Interview. Cognitive tests measured executive function, learning/memory, attention, and processing speed. Lastly, self-reports: PHQ-9, PCL-5, PROMIS-PI, and Pain Catastrophizing Scale measured depression, PTSD, pain intensity, and PC.

Findings

Increased PC, but not pain intensity, was related to poorer executive functioning and processing speed.

Military Impact

Knowing that one's *perception* of pain can affect mental functioning capacities may suggest that behavioral or cognitive therapies could mitigate adverse outcomes in this population.

Hoffman, S., Herbert, M., Crocker, L., DeFord, N., Keller, A., Jurick, S. Sanderson-Cimino, M., & Jak, A. (accepted for publication) The role of pain catastrophizing in cognitive functioning among veterans with history of mild traumatic brain injury. To appear in the Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation.