

Anxiety and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in Disabled War Veterans

Rudolf Gregurek, Herman Vukusic, Vlatka Baretic, Silva Potrebica¹, Veljka Krbot¹, Ivan D'idic¹, Zvonko Turkalj¹, Bitar Zouheir¹, Renata ^op¹, Biserka Sljepcevic¹

Department of Psychological Medicine, University Hospital Center Zagreb, Zagreb; and ¹Special Rehabilitation Hospital, Vara'dinske Toplice, Croatia

Aim. To establish the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the level of trait (STAI-T) anxiety and state (STAI-S) anxiety in a sample (N=53) of disabled Croatian combat veterans.

Method. The psychometric instruments used were the Mississippi Combat Scale for PTSD and Spielberger's state-trait anxiety inventory.

Results. The prevalence of PTSD in the sample was 18.9%. The levels of anxiety (both state and trait) in patients with PTSD were significantly higher than in those without PTSD. Still, the levels of anxiety in patients who did not have PTSD were significantly above the average anxiety values in the normal population.

Conclusion. Significantly higher anxiety levels in patients with PTSD resulted from still unprocessed traumatic experiences and unsuccessful adaptation to their physical disabilities.

Key words: anxiety; disabled; stress disorders, post-traumatic