

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS AND LOW BACK PAIN

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Aim

The aim is to test whether a short psychotherapeutic intervention targeting Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms will have an additional positive effect on the outcomes of the Standard Multidisciplinary Program (SMP).

Focus

Patients with back pain often demonstrate symptoms of PTSD following unpleasant incidents such as traffic accidents or violence, measured via the recognized and evaluated Harvard Trauma Questionnaire Scale (HTQ, part 4). Moreover, it has been found that PTSD and pain may maintain each other.

Methods

One thousand consecutive patients with Low Back Pain (LBP) referred to the Spine Center will be tested for PTSD. It is expected that 100 patients will meet the inclusion criteria and be randomized to SMP or to SMP plus 6-10 psychotherapeutic sessions that will include the trauma method *Somatic Experiencing*. The inclusion criteria: 18-65 years, moderate to severe PTSD symptoms, pain >5 on a 0-10-box scale, and unpleasant incidents.

Conclusion

The project started in February 2013, so there have not yet been any results. Currently total reached 79 patients, 40 patients withdrew SMP + sessions.

It is expected that most patients will suffer from chronic pain, and that physical, psychological and social factors will be involved, creating greater complexity.

It is estimated that 10-20% of the patients will drop out, leaving 40 patients in each randomized group to finish the intervention period. Effect parameters are: Pain, daily function, EuroQOL, HTQ, anxiety and depression (HADS), fear avoidance (Tampa Scale for Kinesiophobia (TSK)) on entry, and at 6 and 12 months.