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Sleep disturbances and PTSD symptom severity associations in a US active duty military inpatient population

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Introduction: Poor sleep quality and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have been shown to be positively associated. However, such findings extend mostly to the outpatient population; the inpatient psychiatric population has largely been understudied. This study investigated the relationship between PTSD and sleep disturbances in a sample of military members presenting for inpatient psychiatric hospitalization.

Methods: A de-identified database with demographic and psychometric information from psychiatric inpatients was used to investigate a relationship between the PTSD Checklist-Civilian (PCL-C) and the DSM-5 Self-Rated Level 1 Cross-Cutting Symptom Measure question 14 for report of problems with sleep. The subjects were adults aged 18 to 50, active duty U.S. military members. Inclusion criteria for the database required admission to the San Antonio Military Medical Center inpatient psychiatric ward and an ability to fill out screening psychometrics.

Results: Psychometric and demographic data of 309 patients over a span of 9 months revealed a mean PCL-C score of 39.56. The prevalence of sleep disturbances was 72.17%. Participants with higher PCL-C scores demonstrated a statistically greater prevalence of sleep symptoms ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: PTSD symptoms are positively associated with sleep disturbances in an inpatient psychiatric active duty population. Findings suggest a need to better understand the interaction between sleep disturbances and PTSD to elucidate potential shared biological underpinnings.

Biography

Joseph Mansfield is currently a Medical student at the Uniformed Services University. He has worked for over 12 years in the Armed Forces in multiple deployed settings. He is currently an Associate Investigator on the first neuromarker database for insomnia patients.

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