



Long-standing Poliomyelitis and Psychological Health.

A Bruno Byte

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Posted by Dr. Richard Bruno from *Disabil Rehabil.* 2015 Feb 27:1-5. Shiri S, al. e*trade

There are no big surprises here, but an interesting article...

Objective: To compare the psychological health of the individuals with long-standing poliomyelitis, with or without post-polio sequelae (PPS), to the general population and to identify the role of work as well as other variables with regard to their psychological health.

Subjects: One hundred and ninety-five polio patients attending post-polio clinic in Jerusalem.

Methods: Emotional distress (ED) was measured using the general health questionnaire (GHQ-12). Demographic, medical, social and functional data were recorded using a specific structured questionnaire. Each polio patient was compared to four age- and sex-matched controls.

Results:

- 1) Emotional Distress was higher in the polio population as compared to the general population.
- 2) Within the polio population Emotional Distress was higher in those who were not working
- 3) There was no relationship between Emotional Distress and the functional level of polio participants and no difference was found in general health between polio participants with or without post-polio sequelae.
- 4) Emotional Distress in the general population was related more to subjects' subjective perception of physical health than among polio survivors.

Conclusions: Long-standing poliomyelitis is associated with decreased psychological health as compared to the general population. Yet, the resilience of polio survivors is seen by their ability to stop additional decline of psychological health in spite of deterioration in their physical health. Work appears to be a significant source of resilience in the post-polio population.

Implications for Rehabilitation: Polio survivors often suffer from high emotional distress and may benefit from psychotherapy aimed at reducing distress.

As active employment status is associated with increased mental health among polio survivors, encouraging participation at work needs to be a significant component of psychotherapeutic programs.

Polio survivors, although physically disabled, are resilient as their mental health is less affected by physical impairments. This and other expressions of resilience may serve as a platform for increasing personal growth among them by implementing hope-oriented psychotherapy.

The Encyclopedia of Polio and Post-Polio Sequelae

contains all of [Dr. Richard Bruno's](#) articles, monographs, commentaries and "Bruno Bytes"
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