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CHILDHOOD TRAUMA, DISSOCIATION IN PATIENTS WITH FIBROMYALGIA AND RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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Introduction: The contribution of childhood trauma and dissociation to the unknown pathophysiology of fibromyalgia has been the subject of considerable debate.

Objectives: To assess and compare the relationship of childhood trauma and somatoform dissociation between patients with fibromyalgia and rheumatoid arthritis both of which are characterized by chronic pain and disability.

Aims: Early life and prolonged trauma may affect brain modulatory circuitry of pain and emotions. The findings of relationship between traumatic events, dissociation and fibromyalgia can lead to a better understanding of the etiology and suggest new treatment modalities.

Methods: Thirty-one patients with fibromyalgia and 19 patients with rheumatoid arthritis were enrolled in the study. All participants were asked to fill in the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire, Somatoform Dissociation Questionnaire and Dissociation Questionnaire.

Results: Physical neglect score was higher in fibromyalgia group than rheumatoid arthritis group ($p < 0.05$) although there was no significant difference between two groups in other subscores of childhood trauma and the rest of the dissociation scores. Total trauma scores were positively correlated with dissociation scores in fibromyalgia group whereas this correlation was not seen in rheumatoid group.

Conclusions: Among childhood trauma types, physical neglect seems to have a more important role in fibromyalgia than rheumatoid arthritis. Fibromyalgia may be related to early life stress or prolonged trauma, affecting brain modulatory circuitry of pain and emotions in genetically susceptible individuals.