

functional and cognitive decline. The phenomenology of AD delusions has not been adequately addressed; neither has whether AD delusions relate to specific cognitive deficits.

Conclusions: Delusions in AD are common and are related to greater rates of cognitive decline. Future studies that explore the relationship between AD, delusions and cognitive decline need to control for methodological issues and need to examine the phenomenology of delusions and their relationship with specific cognitive deficits.

Are affective prosodic deficits evident in bipolar disorder?

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Background: Deficits in affective prosodic processing have been well established in patients with schizophrenia. Yet, no study has examined this skill in a bipolar sample, this was the aim of the current study.

Methods: Three matched groups (patients with bipolar disorder, patients with schizophrenia and healthy controls) completed four affective prosody tasks from the Comprehensive Affective Testing System (CATS); emotional prosody discrimination (EPD), name emotional prosody (NEP), attend to prosody during conflicting prosody (CPP) and attend to meaning during conflicting prosody (CPM).

Results: No significant group effects were found for any of the four tasks on either correct reaction time (RT) or accuracy measures. A task effect, however, was found across all four tasks showing a similar pattern for the RT (correct) and accuracy data; superior performance on EPD, then CPP, followed by NEP then CPM.

Conclusions: The lack of group differences for each of the four tasks may be a reflection of the CATS paradigms lacking the capacity to effectively discriminate subtle differences in performance. An extensive literature indicates that individuals with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder do tend to perform worse on a range of affect tasks that use fearful and sad stimuli. Therefore, the lack of significant group effects in the current tasks may be because of an insufficient number of stimuli per affective category used in each task, thus poor power; alternatively, incongruent accent must be considered, that is, CATS uses American not Australian actors. Further study is recommended using experimental measures of affective prosody.

Omega-3 fatty acids and mood disorders

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Background: Over the past century, consumption of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids has decreased dramatically in Western diets, while consumption of omega-6 has increased. There is mounting evidence suggesting that deficits in dietary intake of omega-3 are associated with a range of health problems, including mood disorders. This review will outline the epidemiological and clinical evidence for an association between omega-3 depletion and mood disorders, including unipolar, bipolar and perinatal depression and suicide risk.

Method: Relevant published studies are reviewed and theories regarding the mechanisms of action are presented.

Results: Strong correlations between rates of seafood consumption and mood disorders have been observed in several epidemiological studies. Biochemical studies indicate that omega-3 levels are lower in the tissue of people with depressive disorders than matched controls. The results of several randomized controlled trials indicate that omega-3 supplementation may have therapeutic benefit for depression sufferers, although not all trials have shown a benefit.

Conclusions: Deficits in omega-3 fatty acids are associated with increased prevalence of mood disorders and offer a potential rational treatment approach. A similar relationship between omega-3 depletion and coronary artery disease may explain the well-described links between coronary artery disease and depression. Inconsistency in clinical trial results to date may reflect differences in the type and dose of omega-3 supplement chosen, the depression subtype and/or baseline omega-3 levels of the study participants.

Meanings of religion and spirituality for adolescent out-patients

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Spirituality is an important but often overlooked area in mental health. This study aimed to examine individual meanings regarding the concepts of religion and spirituality for adolescents attending a mental health out-patient service. Participants were 53 adolescent out-patients of the Department of Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney,