

P02-315 - **SOMATIC SYMPTOMS AMONGST INDIVIDUALS ALSO REPORTING WHIPLASH: A NORWEGIAN POPULATION-BASED STUDY (HUSK)**

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Objectives: Whiplash associated disorder (WAD) is a common, yet poorly understood condition. It has both been considered a chronic pain disorder, due to injury in neck, and a functional somatic syndrome. Based on the hypothesis that chronic WAD lies closer to functional somatic syndromes than to organic pain disorders, we compared the reported level of symptoms associated to somatization (including among others, abdominal pain, nausea, chest pain, breathlessness, skin discoloring and headache) of persons reporting WAD and persons not reporting WAD.

Methods: Data from the population based Hordaland Health Study (HUSK) in Norway 1997-99 (n = 18.581) were used. In this study, 489 participants reporting whiplash also answered questions on symptoms linked to somatic syndromes. These questions were also answered by 13.490 participants without whiplash. Comparing these two groups, independent t-tests were employed for a range of somatic symptoms. Subsequently, a linear regression model was used, enabling adjustment for possible confounding factors, including gender, anxiety, depression, education, poor sleep, benefit reciprocity, physical activity, alcohol consumption, smoking, somatic diagnoses and marital status.

Results: The WAD group reported a significantly higher prevalence of all the reported somatic symptoms (all $p < 0.01$), compared to the control group (mean difference in somatization tendency 0.6 SD). Adjustment for covariates, only marginally reduced the association between whiplash and somatic symptoms.

Conclusion: Our results indicate an association between WAD and somatic symptoms, supporting the notion that WAD should be considered a functional somatic syndrome.