Following trauma, are depression and post-traumatic stress disorder separate conditions, or are they a single traumatic stress construct?

**MAIN RESULTS**

At 3 months, 15% of participants met full criteria for PTSD, depression, or both (21% including those meeting subsyndromal criteria). At 12 months, 14% of individuals met full criteria for PTSD, depression, or both (21% including those meeting subsyndromal criteria). 63% of people with symptoms of PTSD at 3 months had PTSD, depression, or comorbid illness at 12 months, compared with 60% for those with comorbid illness at 3 months. In contrast, 92% of those identified as having depression at 3 months had no diagnosis after 1 year, suggesting characteristics of depression at 3 months that differentiate it from PTSD syndromes.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Comorbid PTSD/depression is virtually indistinguishable from PTSD; however, in the acute but not chronic phase, depression does appear to be a separate construct, with a better prognosis.

**NOTES**

Of 363 initial participants, 337 completed the 3 month follow up, 307 completed the 12 month follow up, and 301 completed both.
PTSD plus depression are comorbid conditions but depression can occur independently in the acute aftermath of trauma

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