

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



The Complex Interplay Between Chronic Pain and Mental Health

Jeffrey Wieskopf
MD, FRCPC



Faculty/Presenter Disclosure

- **Faculty:** Jeffrey Wieskopf, MD CM, FRCPC Psychiatry
- **Relationships with commercial interests:**
 - none

Financial Burden

- It is estimated that \$560-635 billion is spent on pain annually in the US, when factoring in the cost of healthcare, and lost productivity due to pain
- 40 billion dollars spent annually in Canada for Chronic Pain
- 51 billion dollars spent annually for mental illness

Institute of Medicine 2011

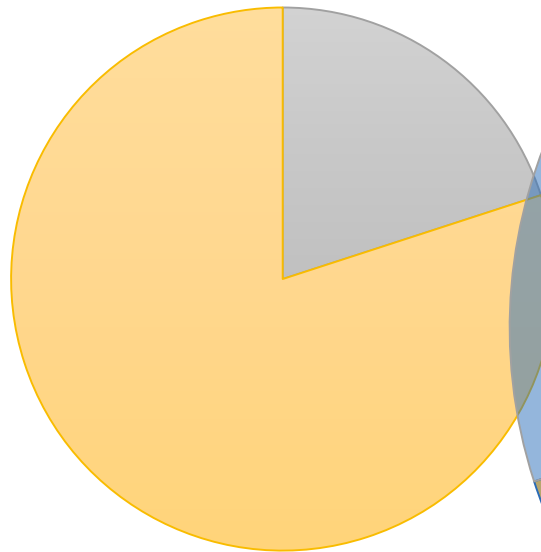
Campbell 2019

Lim et al 2008

Epidemiology

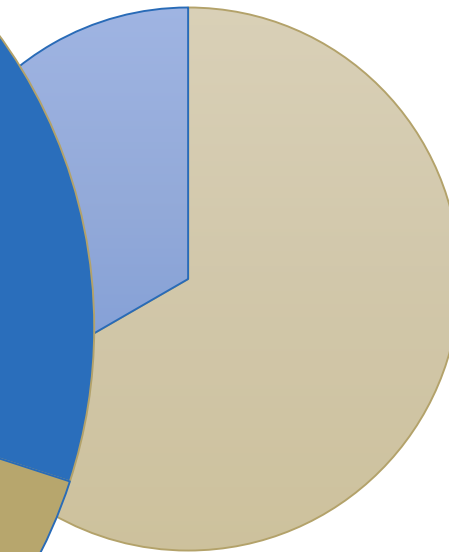
Comorbid Pain and Mental Health

Prevalence of Mental Illness

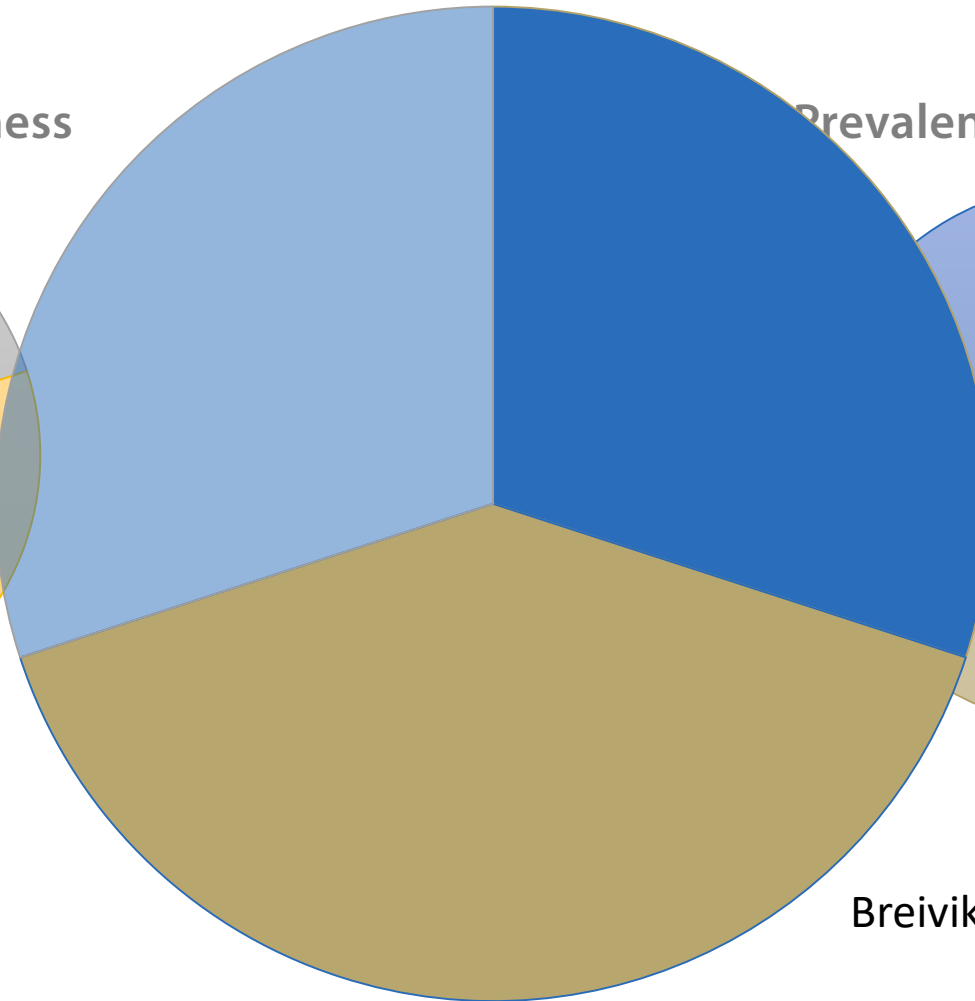


Smetanin et al 2011

Prevalence of Chronic Pain



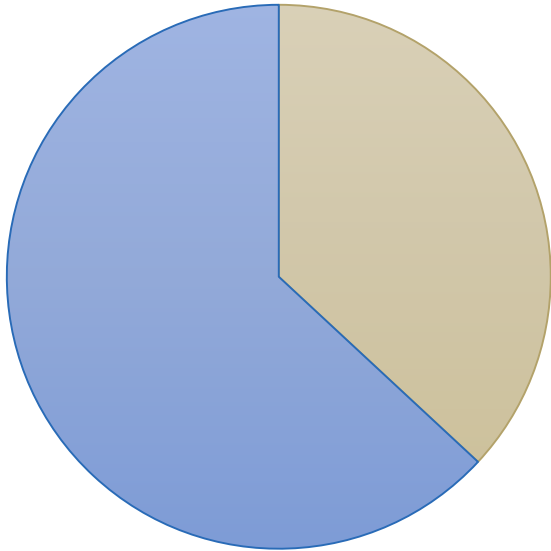
Breivik et al 2006



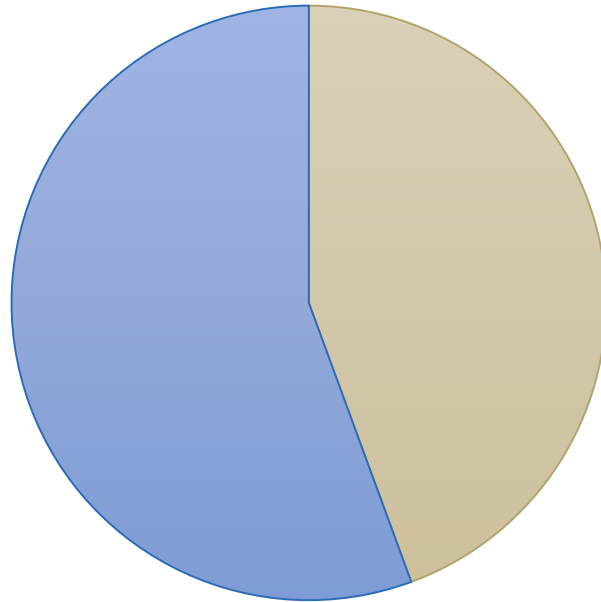
Knaster et al. 2012

Epidemiology

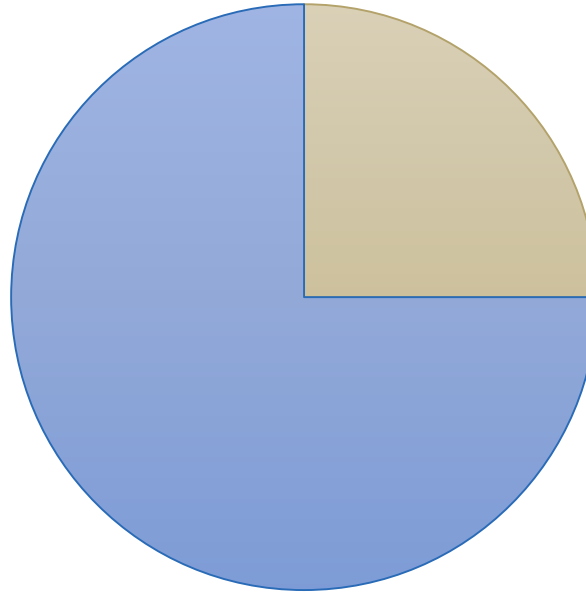
PTSD



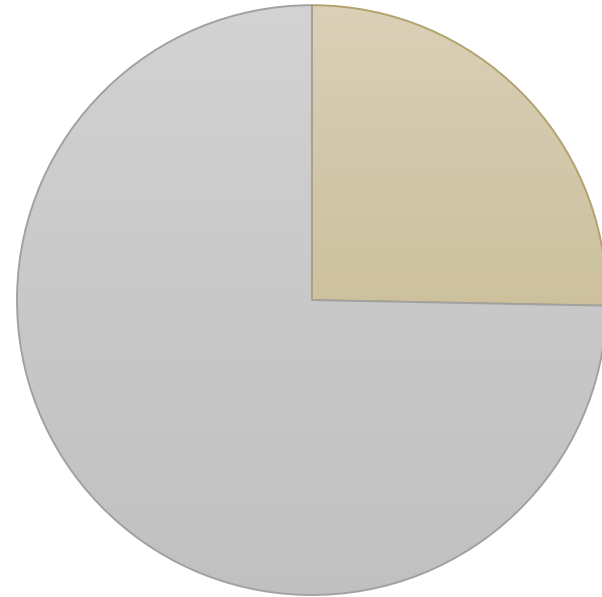
MDD



GAD



2 or more

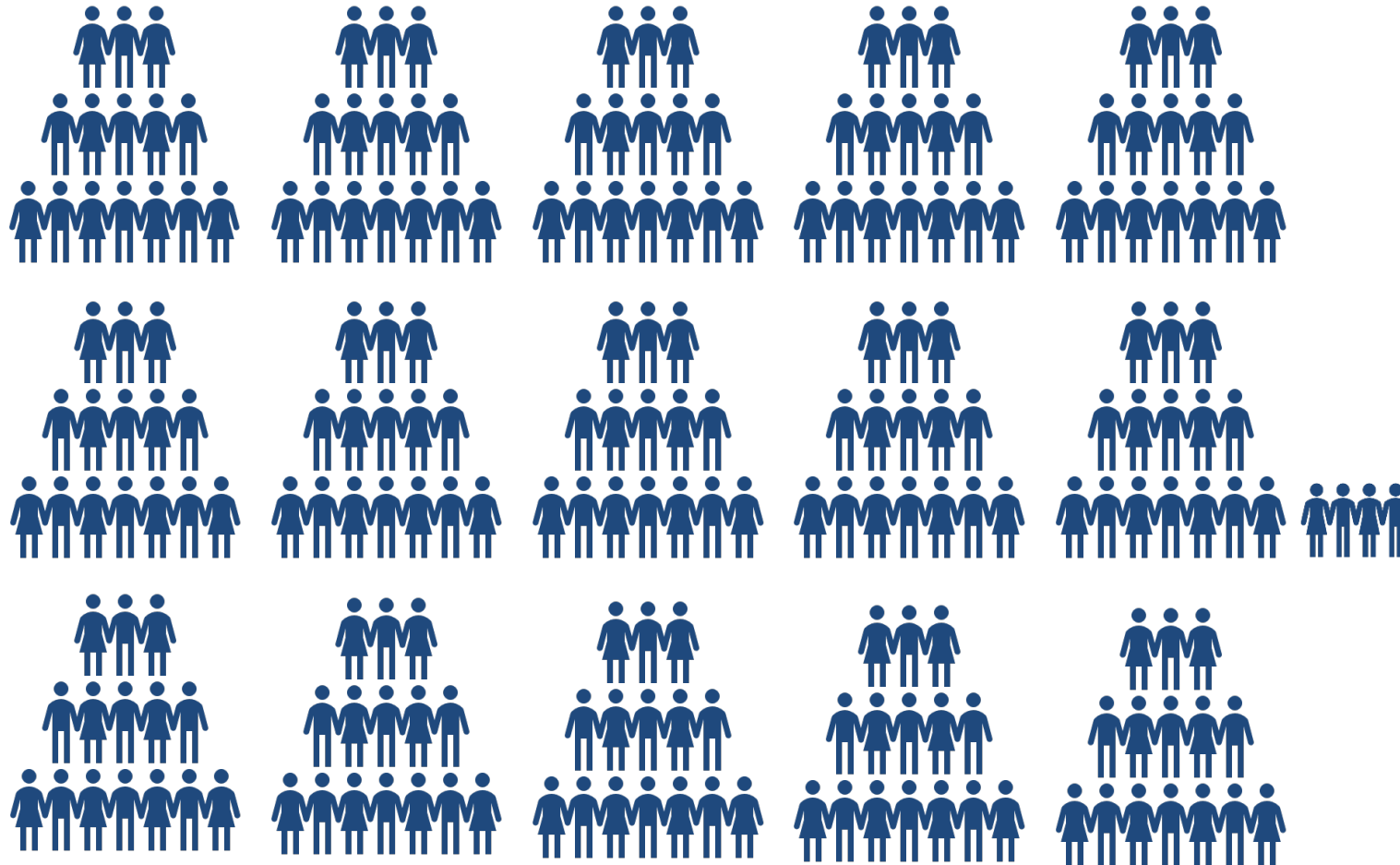


Proctor et al 2013

Knaster et al 2012



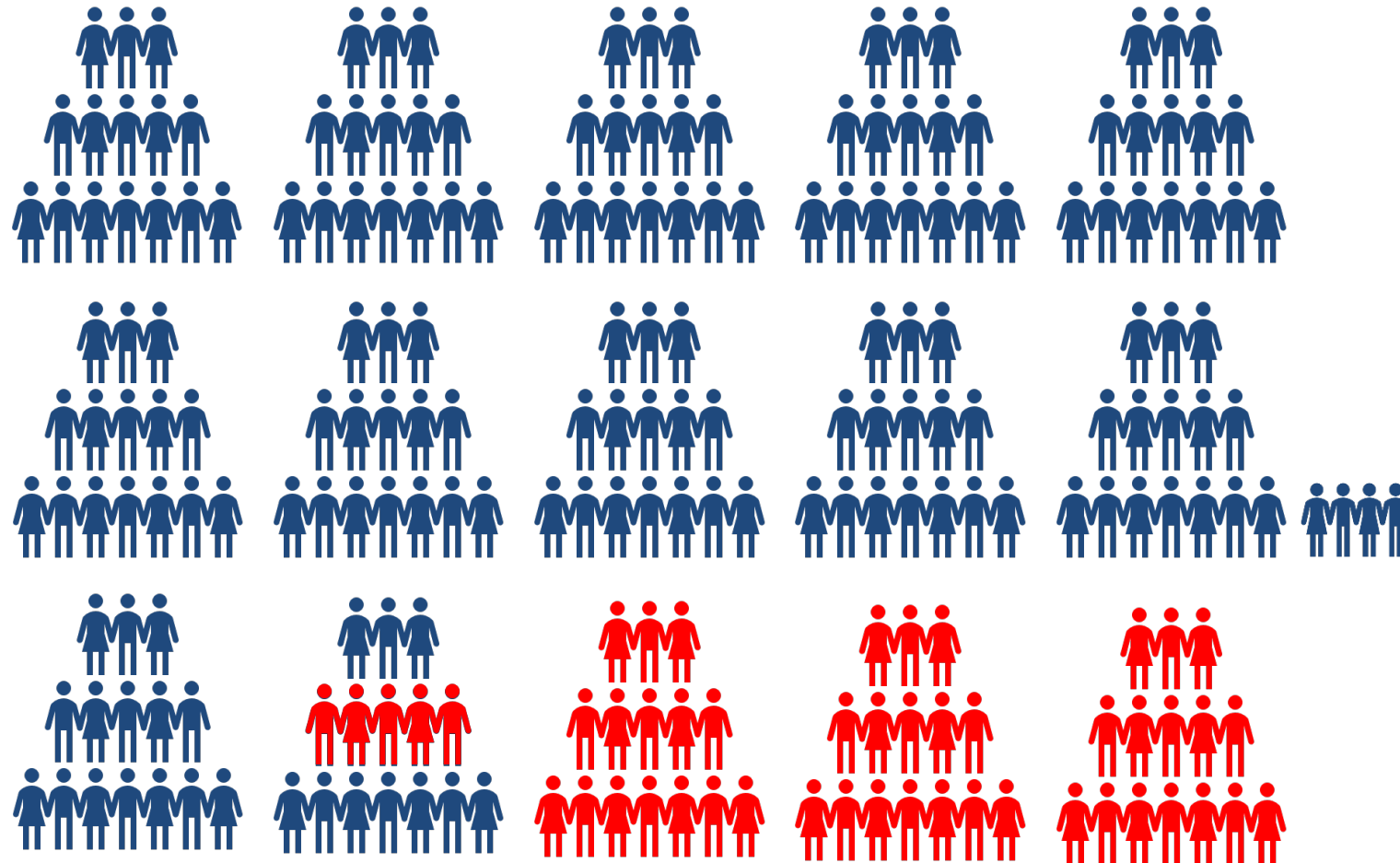
Epidemiology



**Associations
between
chronic pain,
anxiety, and
depression
among adults in
the United
States**

Mullins PM, Yong RJ,
Bhattacharyya N.
Pain Pract. 2023

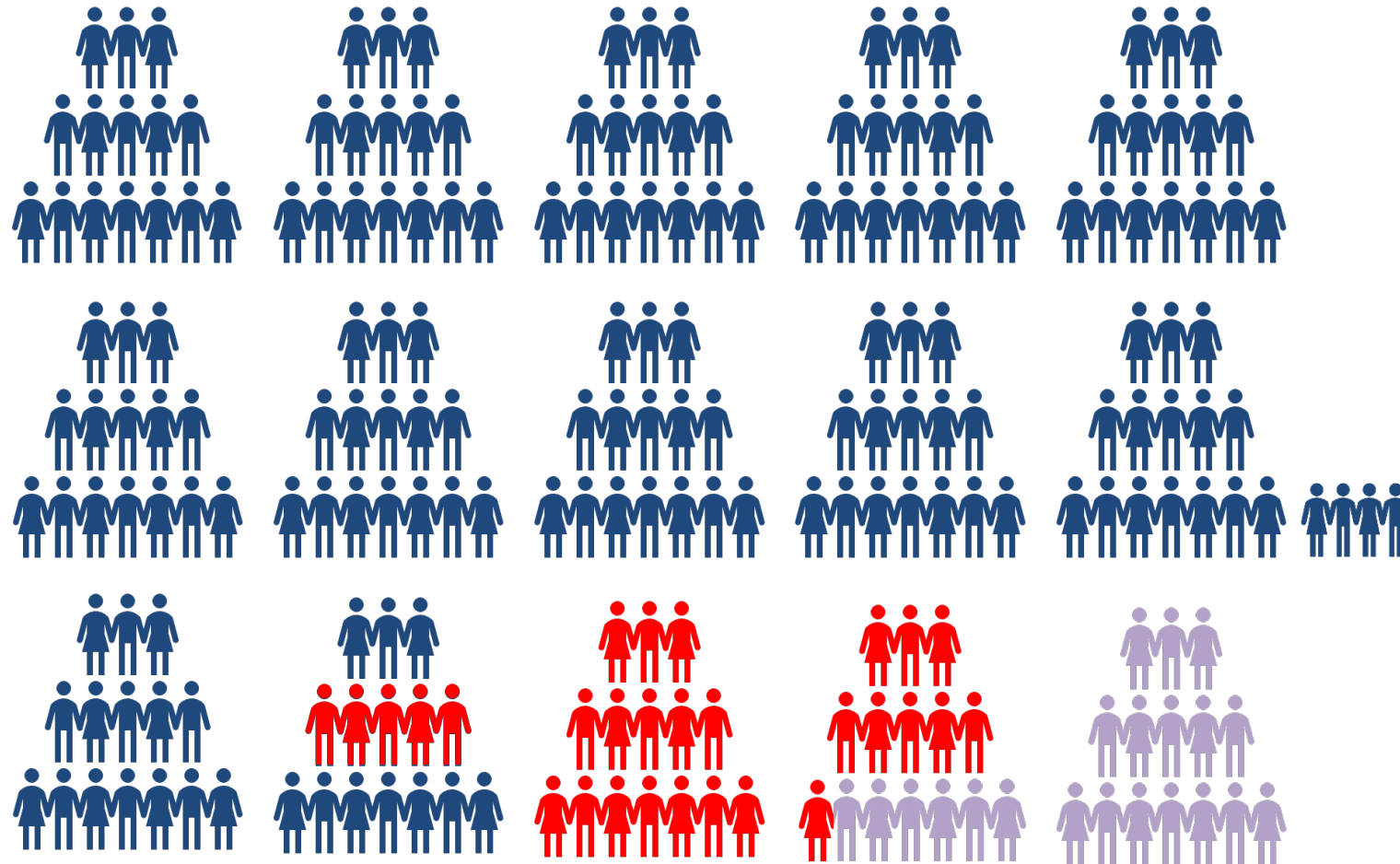
Epidemiology



**Associations
between
chronic pain,
anxiety, and
depression
among adults in
the United
States**

Mullins PM, Yong RJ,
Bhattacharyya N.
Pain Pract. 2023

Epidemiology



**Associations
between
chronic pain,
anxiety, and
depression
among adults in
the United
States**

Mullins PM, Yong RJ,
Bhattacharyya N.
Pain Pract. 2023

Epidemiology



**Associations
between
chronic pain,
anxiety, and
depression
among adults in
the United
States**

Mullins PM, Yong RJ,
Bhattacharyya N.
Pain Pract. 2023

Mortality and Morbidity – Chronic Pain

- 2x risk of death
- Increased risk of mortality from:
 - cancer
 - cardiovascular disease
 - respiratory disease



Persons with chronic widespread pain experience excess mortality: longitudinal results from UK Biobank and meta-analysis

Macfarlane GJ, Barnish MS, Jones GT. Ann Rheum Dis 2017

Mortality and Morbidity – Chronic Pain

- 2x risk of death
- Increased risk of mortality from:
 - cancer
 - cardiovascular disease
 - respiratory disease
 - Increased psychological burden

Vartiainen et al, 2022

Persons with chronic widespread pain experience excess mortality: longitudinal results from UK Biobank and meta-analysis

Macfarlane GJ, Barnish MS, Jones GT. Ann Rheum Dis 2017

Mortality and Morbidity – Mental Illness

- Mental illness and substance use disorders can reduce life expectancy by 10-20 years
- Those with mental illness are at 2-4 fold more risk of early mortality
- Increased risk of comorbid:
 - cardiovascular diseases
 - metabolic diseases
 - neurological diseases
 - cancer
 - immune-mediated inflammatory diseases
 - chronic lower respiratory diseases
 - musculoskeletal diseases

Chesney et al 2014

Eaton et al 2008

Steffen et al 2020

Mortality and Morbidity – Mental Illness

- 2-3 fold increased risk of suicide and suicidal gestures
- 1.6 x risk of alcohol use disorder
- 50% of patients with substance use disorder reporting chronic pain

Racine 2018

Demyttenaere et al 2007

Wyse et al 2021



Chronic Pain and Mental Health

- Physician Shortages
 - o 12 out of 14 Ontario Health Regions do not have enough psychiatrists per capita. This deficit is expected to grow in the next 5-10 years.
- Expertise
 - o General practitioners in both psychiatry and psychology lack expertise in pain management and substance use, which are considered foundational competencies for treatment of patients with chronic pain
- Long Wait Times
- Limited resources/access to resources
- Challenges in treating complex/treatment refractory conditions



Chronic Pain and Mental Health

- Chronic Pain and Mental Illness CAN be invisible illnesses
 - I may LOOK fine. But I am NOT fine.



Ciara: "Because chronic pain is an invisible demon, a lot of people have told me, '*It's all in your head*', or, '*I heard you were sick, but you look fine to me.*' To be in constant pain and at your lowest point, and not be believed by loved ones, is one of the hardest things I've had to face. You may look the same, but you are not the same."

Chronic Pain and Mental Health

- Chronic Pain and Mental Illness CAN be invisible illnesses
- Patients are their own experts

“People believe that they ‘understand chronic pain’ because they have also felt pain but it’s a completely different thing when it’s day in and day out for years,” says Monica C., 36, of Phoenix, Arizona, who has fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome. “I tell people it’s like lifting a glass — anyone can do it for a while — but try to hold a glass in the air for days at a time and you start to get an idea of what I’m dealing with.”

[Creakyjoints.org](https://www.creakyjoints.org)



Chronic Pain and Mental Health

- Chronic Pain and Mental Illness CAN be invisible illnesses
- Patients are their own experts
- Patients often feel stigmatized

2019 survey of working Canadians: ²⁸

- 75% of respondents said they would be reluctant – or would refuse – to disclose a mental illness to an employer or co-worker.

Top Reasons for this reluctance:

- Believe that there is a public stigma around mental health (45%)
- Wouldn't want to be treated differently (44%);
- Wouldn't want to be judged (40%);
- Afraid of negative consequences, such as losing their job (36%)



Chronic Pain and Mental Health

- Chronic Pain and Mental Illness CAN be invisible illnesses
- Patients are their own experts
- Patients often feel stigmatized

2019 survey of working Canadians: ²⁸

- 75% of respondents said they would be reluctant – or would refuse – to disclose a mental illness to an employer or co-worker.

Top Reasons for this reluctance:

- Believe that there is a public stigma around mental health (45%)
- Wouldn't want to be treated differently (44%);
- Wouldn't want to be judged (40%);
- Afraid of negative consequences, such as losing their job (36%)

Nearly half of employed Canadians say that if they admitted they were suffering from a mental illness to a boss or co-worker, they feel their ability to do their job would be questioned



Chronic Pain and Mental Health

- Chronic Pain and Mental Illness CAN be invisible illnesses
- Patients are their own experts
- Patients often feel stigmatized

“I feel like a criminal every time I bring it up with my doctor and they make me jump through so many hoops at the pharmacy. I even had the cops called on me at the ER. I only ever took them exactly as prescribed and they still cut me off,” he says.

Karl H, 66, Madison Wisconsin
Creakyjoints.org



Chronic Pain and Mental Health

QUESTIONS?