

# Prediction of psychological distress among persons with spinal cord injury or acquired brain injury and their significant others

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## Objective

To identify variables measured at the start of first inpatient rehabilitation that predict psychological distress among persons with spinal cord injury or acquired brain injury (pwSCI/ABI) and their significant others (SO) 6 months after discharge.

## Methods

Prospective longitudinal study in 12 Dutch rehabilitation centers.

## Outcome

Psychological distress, measured with the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale.

## Predictors

Potential predictors: sociodemographic, injury-related, psychological.

Adaptive psychological characteristics:

- Combination of self-efficacy, proactive coping, purpose in life and resilience

Maladaptive psychological characteristics:

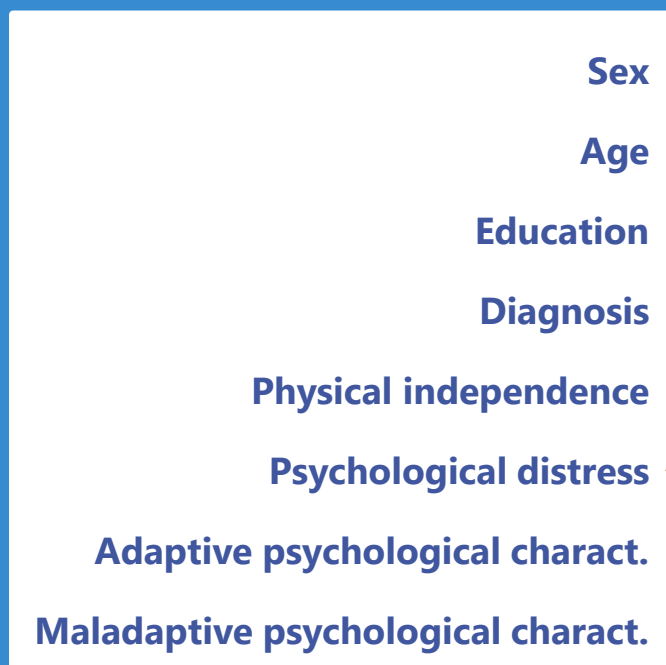
- Combination of passive coping, neuroticism, appraisals of threat and loss

## Analyses

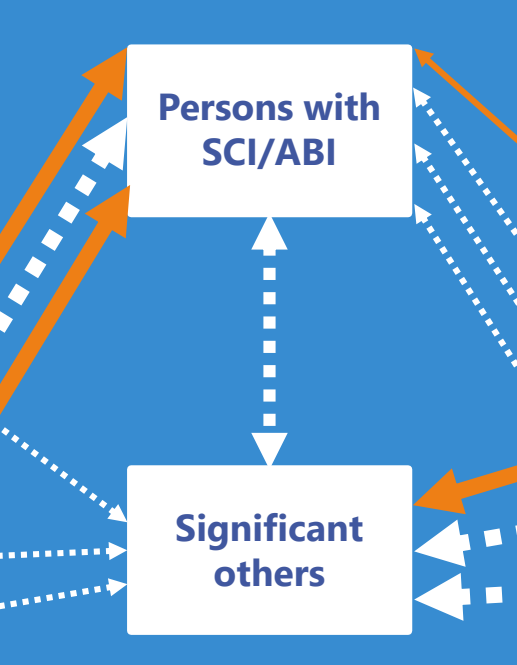
Pearson correlations between potential predictors and follow-up psychological distress.

Multivariate analyses of covariance (MANCOVA) to investigate independent predictors.

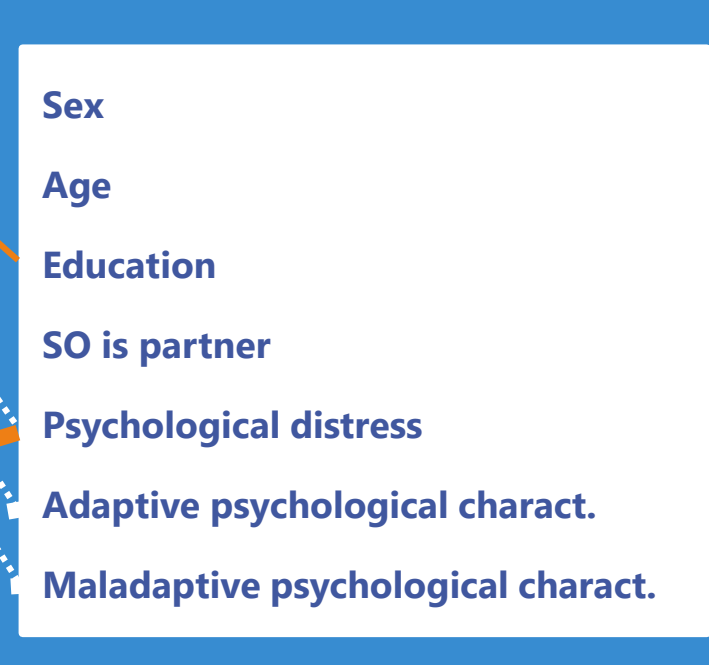
## Baseline variables persons with SCI/ABI



## Psychological distress 6 months after discharge



## Baseline variables significant others



..... Only bivariately correlated; — Independent predictor; narrow line = correlation coeff  $\leq .30$ ; thick line = correlation coeff  $> .30$

## Participants

157 dyads of adult pwSCI/ABI (resp.  $n = 79 / n = 78$ ) and their adult SO.

PwSCI/ABI: 57% male, mean age = 56 years (SD = 15), 38% high educational level.

SO: 78% partner.

## Main results

Sociodemographic and injury-related variables were not or weakly related to psychological distress, psychological variables more strongly.

There were crosswise relations between pwSCI/ABI and SO, but less strongly than intra-personal relations.

## SCI versus ABI

Results were comparable across diagnoses.

## Independent predictors distress PwSCI/ABI

- Educational level SO
  - Own baseline psychological distress
  - Own maladaptive psychological characteristics
- Explained variance = 41.9%.

## Independent predictor distress SO

- Only own baseline psychological distress
- Explained variance = 40.4%.

## Conclusions

Primarily one's own baseline psychological distress and psychological characteristics are important in the prediction of later psychological distress.

Screening of these variables could help to identify persons at risk for psychological distress.