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Vulnerable narcissism is associated with severity of depressive symptoms in dysthymic patients.

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ABSTRACT

Pathological narcissism involves grandiose and vulnerable presentations. Narcissism, and specifically the vulnerable presentation, has been associated to depression, although empirical research studying this relationship is limited. Dysthymia is characterized by a greater treatment resistance and poorer prognosis than other chronic depressive disorders. The presence of dysfunctional personality traits may explain it. We aim to explore the association between vulnerable narcissistic traits and severity of depressive symptoms in a sample of dysthymic patients. To that end, 80 dysthymic outpatients were evaluated. The treating psychiatrist collected sociodemographic and clinical data and completed the Clinical Global Impression-Severity Scale. Patients completed the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS), that respectively assess severity of depressive symptoms and vulnerable narcissism. We tested for potential confounders and conducted a regression analysis to explore whether severity of vulnerable narcissism was associated with greater depressive symptoms. HSNS was found to be the principal predictor of BDI, and along with age, accounted for 23% of the variance in BDI. An assessment of personality functioning is therefore recommended in chronically depressed patients that have been refractory to standard

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