

New Research From Clinical Psychological Science

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[Emotion Regulatory Flexibility Sheds Light on the Elusive Relationship Between Repeated Traumatic Exposure and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Symptoms](#)

Einat Levy-Gigi, George A. Bonanno, Alla R. Shapiro, Gal Richter-Levin, Szabolcs Kéri, and Gal Sheppes

Research examining the relationship between trauma exposure and the development of posttraumatic stress symptoms in people who are repeatedly exposed to on-the-job trauma has shown inconsistent results. Why might this be? Active-duty firefighters were assessed for trauma exposure and posttraumatic stress symptoms, and they completed an emotional regulation choice task. In the task, participants were exposed to high- and low-intensity emotional images and chose to use either reappraisal (a regulatory style effective for low-intensity emotions) or distraction (a regulatory style effective for high-intensity emotions) as a regulatory strategy. A positive relationship between trauma exposure and PTSD symptoms was seen only for first responders who were not flexible with their choice of regulatory style, indicating that regulatory flexibility could help protect those who experience frequent trauma from developing PTSD.

[Interaction of CD38 Variant and Chronic Interpersonal Stress Prospectively Predicts Social Anxiety and Depression Symptoms Over 6 Years](#)

Benjamin A. Tabak, Suzanne Vrshek-Schallhorn, Richard E. Zinbarg, Jason M. Prenoveau, Susan Mineka, Eva E. Redei, Emma K. Adam, and Michelle G. Craske

Recent studies have shown that variation in the CD38 gene, which helps regulate secretion of oxytocin, may also influence social behaviors. Specifically, the rs3796863 A allele is associated with increased social sensitivity, whereas having one or more rs3796863 C alleles is associated with decreased social sensitivity. High-school students completed clinical diagnostic interviews, life-stress interviews, and symptom questionnaires annually for 6 years. Increasing levels of interpersonal stress were associated with increasing levels of trait anxiety for adolescents with the A allele but not for those with the C/C allele. While stress was associated with depression for all participants, this relationship was stronger for those with the A allele, indicating that this genetic variant may be a risk factor for social anxiety and, to a lesser extent, depression.