PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF THE PTSD CHECKLIST FOR THE DSM 5 IN PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH BURNS (018)

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Introduction: Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a common problem among parents of children with burns. However, there is a paucity of evaluated screening tools for this population. The aim was to evaluate the psychometric properties of the PTSD Checklist (PCL), which is recently revised in accordance to the Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, 5th ed.

Methods: The participating parents (N= 62, mean age= 38) completed self-report questionnaires 0.8-5.6 years after their child’s burn. Measures were the PCL-5 (consisting of four subscales; Intrusion, Avoidance, Negative alterations in cognitions and mood, and Arousal and reactivity), the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (with three subscales; Intrusion, Avoidance and Hyperarousal) and the Perceived Stress Scale. The children had a TBSA burned ranging from 1 to 31 % and were 0.1-15.0 years of age at injury.

Results: The average PCL-5 scores were low to moderate and indicated that no parent was above the recommended preliminary cut off of 38 for PTSD. Cronbach’s alpha values were acceptable and varied between 0.56 and 0.77 for the four PCL-5 subscales and mean inter-item correlations ranged from 0.22 to 0.73. The PCL-5 subscales were positively correlated with the corresponding IES-R subscales as well as the total PSS score (p

There were no associations between the PCL-5 and burn severity (TBSA, TBSA-FT, and LOS), time since injury, child age or gender, or parent gender.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the PCL-5 had high internal consistency and evaluation of concurrent validity suggested moderate associations with other measures of traumatic stress and perceived stress as expected. The moderate associations with other measures of stress is to be expected, taking into account the slightly different constructs targeted by the three measures in this study. This first study suggests that the PCL-5 is a psychometrically sound instrument that deserves further evaluation as a screening tool for parents of children with burns.