

Will psychological therapy be helpful for women who experience intimate partner violence?

Clinical Question	What is the effectiveness of psychological therapies for women who experience intimate partner violence (IPV)?
Bottom Line	Evidence showed that for women who experience IPV, psychological therapies probably reduce depression. With longer duration of psychological therapies (five or more sessions) showing showed a greater beneficial effect in reducing depression than fewer sessions. However, there is limited available evidence of beneficial effects of therapy in enhancing self-efficacy. There was also evidence that psychological therapies may reduce anxiety symptoms. Overall, no evidence was found to show that psychological therapies had a negative or harmful effect.
Caveat	Most trials were conducted in English-speaking, high-income countries (e.g. USA, Australia, UK), which limits applicability to low- and middle-income settings and for non-English speakers. Participants' ethnic backgrounds were diverse across the trials. However, the nature of IPV, social and healthcare responses to IPV, as well as the ability to deliver and receptivity to psychological therapies, differ across countries and limit the generalisability of these findings. The quality of the evidence for primary outcomes was moderate for depression and low for self-efficacy. For secondary outcomes, the quality of evidence was mainly low due to risks of bias, inconsistency and imprecision.
Context	IPV against women is prevalent and strongly associated with mental health problems. Women experiencing IPV attend health services frequently for mental health problems. The World Health Organization recommends that women who have experienced IPV and have a mental health diagnosis should receive evidence-based mental health treatments.
Cochrane Systematic Review	Hameed M, O'Doherty L, Gilchrist G, Tirado-Muñoz J, Taft A, Chondros P, Feder G, Tan M, Hegarty K. Psychological therapies for women who experience intimate partner violence. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2020, Issue 7. Art. No.: CD013017. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD013017.pub2. This review contains 33 trials with a total of 5517 participants.
Pearls No. 661, August 2020, written by Vanessa MB Jordan.	

Systematic review link:

<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD013017.pub2/full>