

## **Chronic fatigue syndrome, depression and anxiety : Where is the link?**

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There is a high incidence of depression and anxiety in chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), which has led to suggest a common etiology to these disorders. However, in contrast to depression, CFS shows no relation to the adverse life events and it is characterized by hypocortisolism and up-regulated serotonin (5-HT) receptors. The neurobiologic dysfunction in CFS is similar to that seen in posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a disorder precipitated by psychological stress rather than the infectious stress that seems to precipitate CFS. The repeated symptom exacerbation caused by exercise leads to exercise restriction, which can be conceptualized as the behavioral avoidance similar to that in anxiety disorders and PTSD. The most effective treatment strategies are the psychological rehabilitation therapies using cognitive-behavioral principles, though there remains a need to investigate drug treatments based on the neurobiologic abnormalities in CFS as described in this article.