

SOMATOFORM DISORDER

What is it?

- Somatoform Disorder is characterized by continuous, distressing pain or other bodily complaints present on most days for at least 6 months which cannot be fully explained by any underlying medical causes.

How common is it?

- Around 5-12% of people suffer from this disorder. It is more common in females.

What are the common symptoms?

- Pain is the most predominant symptom.
- Tingling, numbness, tiredness and other sensory disturbances are also reported.
- These complaints cannot be explained by known physical diseases on examination or by investigations.
- Psychological factors are judged to have an important role in the onset, severity, exacerbation, or maintenance of the pain.

What are the treatments available?

Effective treatments in the form of medications and counseling - psychotherapy are available.

- Medications: Mainly antidepressants, to be taken only after consulting a qualified psychiatrist

- Various forms of individual psychotherapy have also been found to be useful in the treatment.

Myths and Facts

Myth	Fact
Patients intentionally produce or put on fake symptoms.	Patients do not intentionally produce symptoms or put on fake symptoms.
Pain always indicates a physical problem.	The symptoms are subconscious manifestation of underlying psychological factors.
It is an indicator of a serious illness.	It is not a life threatening illness and can improve with proper treatment.



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEURO SCIENCES

Consultation Liaison Psychiatry
NIMHANS CENTRE FOR WELLBEING

1/B, 9th main, 1st phase, 1st stage, BTM
Layout, Bangalore-76

Phone- 080 26685948/ 9480829670

Email- nimhans.wellbeing@gmail.com