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CONSEQUENCES ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IN CHILEAN AND SPANISH WOMEN EXPOSED TO INTIMATE PARTNER

VIOLENCE

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Introduction: numerous studies have shown higher rates of anxiety and depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic diseases and other physical symptoms in women exposed to intimate partner violence. Objectives: to analyze the relationships between duration and frequency of abuse and diverse health factors (mental health, physical complaints, post-traumatic stress disorder and self-perceived health) in a sample of battered women. Methods: This study is composed of 274 battered women from Chile and Spain. The instruments used were: a semi-structured interview for victims of abuse, specifically designed for this research, which assesses sociodemographic characteristics of victims and circumstances of abuse; the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) (Goldberg and Williams, 1988); Complaints Questionnaire, extracted from the National Health Survey of Spain (INE, 2006) and the Severity of Symptom Scale for PTSD (Echeburúa et al., 1997). Results: the results show that both the duration and frequency of intimate partner violence are associated to poorer health outcomes. For example, higher duration of violence leads to higher number of physical ailments and higher severity of PTSD symptomatology. Conclusions: this results allow a better understanding of women health that suffer this kind of violence from their partners, and let us to develop treatment programs that best suit their specific needs, both in the private and public health field.