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Health

RSS Feed

Some with head injuries feign disorders

Published: Jan. 14, 2008 at 10:09 PM

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GRANADA , Spain, Jan. 14 (UPI) -- A University of Granada study in Spain found four out of 10 patients with head injuries feign cognitive disorders such as depression, headaches or anxiety.

Dr. Raquel Vilar Lopez said she used a lie detector -- which registers the physiological responses of blood pressure, heart beat, breathing rate and galvanic skin response -- to find out if a person is faking or exaggerating their symptoms.

The study found nearly half of the people who go to court feign psycho-cognitive disorders with the objective of profiting in some way. These "simulators" are not hypochondriacs or overanxious or obsessive patients, they just lie in order to receive some sort of compensation, Lopez said.

Lopez used lie detectors on 80 psychology students and one group, without any disorders, were asked to fake them in order to confirm the validity of the test. In addition, 54 actual patients were analyzed by the doctors.

The researcher said that "although the lie detector itself has no scientific rigor, it could be an efficient instrument if combined with other tools."

Part of the findings were presented at the International Neuropsychological Society and National Academy of Neuropsychology conferences as well as the Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology.

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