

[J Appl Psychol.](#) 1989 Oct;74(5):787-96.

Contribution of concrete cognition to emotion: neutral symptoms as elicitors of worry about cancer.

[Easterling DV](#), [Leventhal H](#).

Abstract

The relationship between worry about cancer and judged cancer risk was examined among 54 expatients who had been cured of breast cancer and 81 women with no history of cancer. Worry required both a perception of substantial risk and the presence of concrete perceptual cues. Worry promoters include visits to a physician and concrete, noncancerlike symptoms (e.g., fever, pain). Supporting analyses indicate that the symptom effects are not due to self-report biases or attributions of symptoms to cancer but are the result of a reminder process whereby vulnerability beliefs are aroused by somatic cues. Judged cancer risk was unrelated to affective cues, suggesting that across-time variation in worry about cancer reflects the onset and offset of symptom episodes rather than a shift in risk appraisals. Expatients were more worried overall than nonpatient controls. The results have implications for controlling disease worry and initiating preventive behaviors.

PMID:

2793775

[PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]