

*OB Scholtz et al. Behavioural Research and Therapy. December (2001) Vol. 39 #12 p 1429.*

Inappropriate and spontaneous muscle tension is implicated in several models of the pathogenesis of DRSI.

The experiment reported here was designed to discover if somatoform disorder patients were unable to accurately perceive the state of muscle tension in their own bodies. If so, there could be support for the muscle tension model. Lack of awareness of muscle tension would prevent the adoption of appropriate coping behaviours.

20 somatoform patients (DSMIV) and 20 healthy normal controls were compared. 13 men 7 women in each group- mean age 46 and 42.

EMG linked to tasks related to muscle relaxation.

SCL 90 was used to assess the degree of affliction.

The researchers report that inaccurate proprioception was not found in the cases. In fact cases had higher accuracy than controls.

Higher sensitivity to stimuli is found.



### **Comment**

Although a surprising result to the researchers, who were hoping to establish an organic explanation for the disorder, they accept that over-sensitivity to discomfort may contribute to the pathogenesis of this condition.