Supplementary Panel S1: Quality Ratings

- The quality of the included meta-analyses was independently rated by two raters (CS, SR), using a published checklist.[1, 2] Consensus ratings were used. For the purpose of this review, the items 1 to 9 of this check list were rated. They were complemented by an additional item addressing whether the meta-analysis was registered and by item 12 of AMSTAR-II [3] which addresses whether the meta-analysis took the impact of bias on results into account.
- The items of the quality rating were rated as "1=yes", "0=no", "2=unclear" or "3=not applicable". we decided to transform ratings of 2 and 3 into 0, as it was of interest to us whether a certain quality feature was fulfilled or not – regardless of the reason.
- Across all 102 meta-analyses, the mean number of positively rated items was 8.71 (SD=1.43, range: 4-11).
- Three items were fulfilled by 100% of the meta-analyses (items, 1, 2, 8). The items 3 and 5 were fulfilled by 99% and 98% of the meta-analyses, item 9 by 78%, the items 4, 6 and 7 by 67%. The items 10 (Amstar-II, item 12, addressing whether the meta-analysis took the impact of bias on results into account) and 11 (study registration) were least frequently fulfilled (48% and 47%). Thus, the majority of meta-analysis did not take the impact of bias on results into account. This applies to study registration as well.
- Eleven percent of all meta-analyses fulfilled all items, 20% fulfilled 10 items, 27% fulfilled 9 items, 21% fulfilled 8 items, 17% fulfilled 7 items. Four meta-analyses fulfilled only 6 items [4-7] and one meta-analysis only 4 items.[8]

- As stated in the study protocol we selected the meta-analysis with the largest number of trials (even without quality assessment), if no meta-analysis for a specific condition was available which took methodological quality into account). This applied to only one meta-analysis (paroxetine in anxiety disorders).[8]
- The meta-analyses on psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy (head-to head-comparisons and combined therapy excluded) did not differ significantly with regard to their quality ratings (sum of positively rated items, pharmacotherapy: mean=8.68, SD=1.54, psychotherapy: mean=8.95, SD=1.12, t=0.74, p=0.46).

References

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