

# BRIDGING THE GAP

*A newsletter for medical professionals*

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## Feature Article 2

### Research Assesses the Risk Factors for Surgical Outcomes

What exactly are the facts about what can be determined beforehand about a person's likely surgical outcome? Dr. Daniel Bruns and Dr. Mark Disorbio have delved into years of study and research to examine the evidence. Their findings are published in the article, "Assessment of Biopsychosocial Risk Factors for Medical Treatment: A Collaborative Approach," in the current *Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings*.

After reviewing the literature, Dr. Bruns and Dr. Disorbio identified exclusionary and cautionary risk factors that evidence or consensus opinion suggest influence outcomes from medical treatment. Exclusionary risks are extreme signs or symptoms, such as when a patient is psychotic, suicidal or homicidal. In contrast, cautionary risks are signs or symptoms that are less severe, such as job dissatisfaction or a history of substance abuse. These risk factors were then assessed, using the BHI™ 2 and BBHI™ 2 tests using a national sample of both community members, and medical patients in groups that included spinal surgery, upper and lower extremity surgery, chronic pain and brain injury.

The results of this study found that psychosocial variables are strongly associated with a poor outcome from a variety of medical treatment procedures. These results underscore the crucial role psychologists can play in determining the best approach for a patient's treatment, particularly patients who are candidates for elective, invasive procedures, and when the procedure is performed to reduce subjective symptoms such as pain. [Read the complete article](#) from the *Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings*.

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