

Health Insights Today

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Mind-Body Research Update

When reading reports on new research, it is important to remember that no single study should be seen as providing the whole truth. The following reports offer helpful clues but in most cases further research is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn.

Mind-Body Methods Help War-Traumatized Children

This is the first randomized controlled trial (RCT) of any intervention with war traumatized children, and the first of any traumatized population using a comprehensive program of mind-body medicine. Eighty-two adolescents with diagnosed posttraumatic stress disorder were randomly assigned to a 12-session mind-body group program or a wait-list control group. The program was conducted by high school teachers in consultation with psychiatrists and psychologists and included meditation, guided imagery, and breathing techniques; self-expression through words, drawings, and movement; autogenic training and biofeedback; and genograms. Students in the immediate intervention group had significantly lower PTSD symptom scores following the intervention than those in the wait-list control group and these gains were maintained at 3-month follow-up. After the wait-list control group received the intervention, there was a significant decrease in PTSD symptom scores compared to the pre-intervention scores.

Gordon JS, Staples JK, Blyta A, Bytyqi M, Wilson AT. Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Postwar Kosovar Adolescents Using Mind-Body Skills Groups: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *J Clin Psychiatry* 2008;69:1469-1476.

Mindfulness Meditation Helpful for Tinnitus

Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) is a very bothersome condition for which effective treatment has proved elusive. This study was to investigate the effects of cognitive behavioral therapy and meditation in tinnitus sufferers. Twenty-five chronic tinnitus sufferers were consecutively allocated to two groups, one receiving a cognitive behavioral therapy/meditation intervention of four one hour sessions with the other group waiting three months and subsequently treated in the same way, thereby acting as their own control. There were statistically significant reductions in tinnitus variables in the mind-body intervention group. The control group showed no changes during the waiting list period but improved after treatment. The improvement was maintained at the four to six month period.

Sadlier M, Stephens SD, Kennedy V. Tinnitus rehabilitation: a mindfulness meditation cognitive behavioural therapy approach. *J Laryngol Otol.* 2008;122(1):31-37.

Mindfulness Meditation May Help Low Back Pain Patients

This pilot feasibility study was designed as a randomized, controlled clinical trial. Participants were 37 community-dwelling older adults aged 65 years and older with chronic low back pain of moderate intensity occurring daily or almost every day. Participants were randomized to an 8-week mindfulness-based meditation program or to a wait-list control group. Baseline, 8-week and 3-month follow-up measures of pain, physical function, and quality of life were assessed. The mean age of the sample was 74.9 years. At the end of the intervention 30/37 (81%) participants completed 8-week assessments. Average class attendance of the intervention arm was 6.7 out of 8. They meditated an average of 4.3 days a week and the average minutes per day was 31.6. Compared to the control group, the intervention group displayed significant improvement in the Chronic Pain Acceptance Questionnaire Total Score and Activities Engagement subscale and SF-36 Physical Function.

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Morone NE, Greco CM, Weiner DK. Mindfulness meditation for the treatment of chronic low back pain in older adults: a randomized controlled pilot study. *Pain*. 2008;134(3):310-319.