

Curbing depression in adults with epilepsy

November 3 2010, By Ashante Dobbs

A telephone- and Internet-delivered mindfulness-based depression treatment has been shown to significantly reduce depressive symptoms in adults with epilepsy, according to a study by Emory University public health researchers, published in the November 2010 issue of *Epilepsy & Behavior*.

The treatment called UPLIFT (Using Practice and Learning to Increase Favorable Thoughts) is a home-based depression prevention and treatment program. Based on mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, the weekly program was designed for group delivery via the phone or Web. It involves eight, hour-long sessions focused on increasing knowledge about depression, [epilepsy](#), cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness.

Forty participants were randomly assigned to participate in the intervention or waitlist groups. [Depressive symptoms](#) and other outcomes were measured at baseline, after eight weeks, and after 16 weeks.

Depressive symptoms decreased by 64 percent in the intervention group but only by 15 percent in the waitlist group. There was no significant difference in results between participants who received the intervention via telephone or Internet.

“The Project UPLIFT intervention was effective in teaching people with [epilepsy](#) the knowledge and skills associated with reducing their symptoms of depression,” says lead study author Nancy Thompson, PhD,

associate professor of behavioral science and health education at Emory's Rollins School of Public Health. "Addressing the mental health needs of this population is important as many people with epilepsy – between 32 percent and 48 percent – report being depressed as well as feeling isolated and stigmatized."

Future studies of the UPLIFT program will target other populations at risk of [depression](#), such as caregivers or persons with disabilities, who may benefit from a home-based treatment. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funded the Project UPLIFT pilot study.

Provided by Emory University

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