

# Long-term benefits of mindfulness psychotherapy in diabetes

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In the last issue of *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic*, a group of Dutch investigators headed by professor Paul Emmelkamp reports on the long-term outcome of a psychotherapy study in diabetes. Depressive symptoms are very common in patients with diabetes, and this comorbidity negatively influences the patients' medical outcomes and mortality. The burden of depression is intensified by its chronic course trajectory, as a substantial number of patients show a relapse of their symptoms after having recovered. Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) is a potential effective psychological intervention for treating current depressive symptoms and also for relapse prevention treatment.

The current study focuses on the long-term effects of both treatments. We hypothesized that reductions in [depressive symptoms](#) achieved directly after MBCT and CBT would be sustained during the 9-month follow-up period. 94 adult patients with type 1 or 2 diabetes and comorbid depressive symptoms [i.e. Beck Depression Inventory II (BDI-II) score  $\geq 14$ ]. were included in the study. Patients were randomly assigned to either MBCT, CBT or a waiting list condition. After the waiting period, participants who still had depressive symptoms ( $n = 28$ ) were again randomized to either MBCT or CBT and combined with the original sample, yielding the current sample size of 91, with 45 patients receiving MBCT and 46 CBT.

Of the 91 patients who entered MBCT and CBT, 12 patients in each condition completed fewer than 6 of the 8 sessions and were considered dropouts. Results indicate that both MBCT and CBT have sustained

beneficial effects on depressive symptoms and related symptomatology, confirming findings of previous studies on the long-term effects of either MBCT or CBT.

MBCT and CBT both seem to be effective treatments for depressive symptoms in a variety of populations.

**More information:** "Long-Term Effects of Individual Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy and Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Depressive Symptoms in Patients with Diabetes: A Randomized Trial." *Psychother Psychosom* 2015;84:186-187 DOI: 10.1159/000375453

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