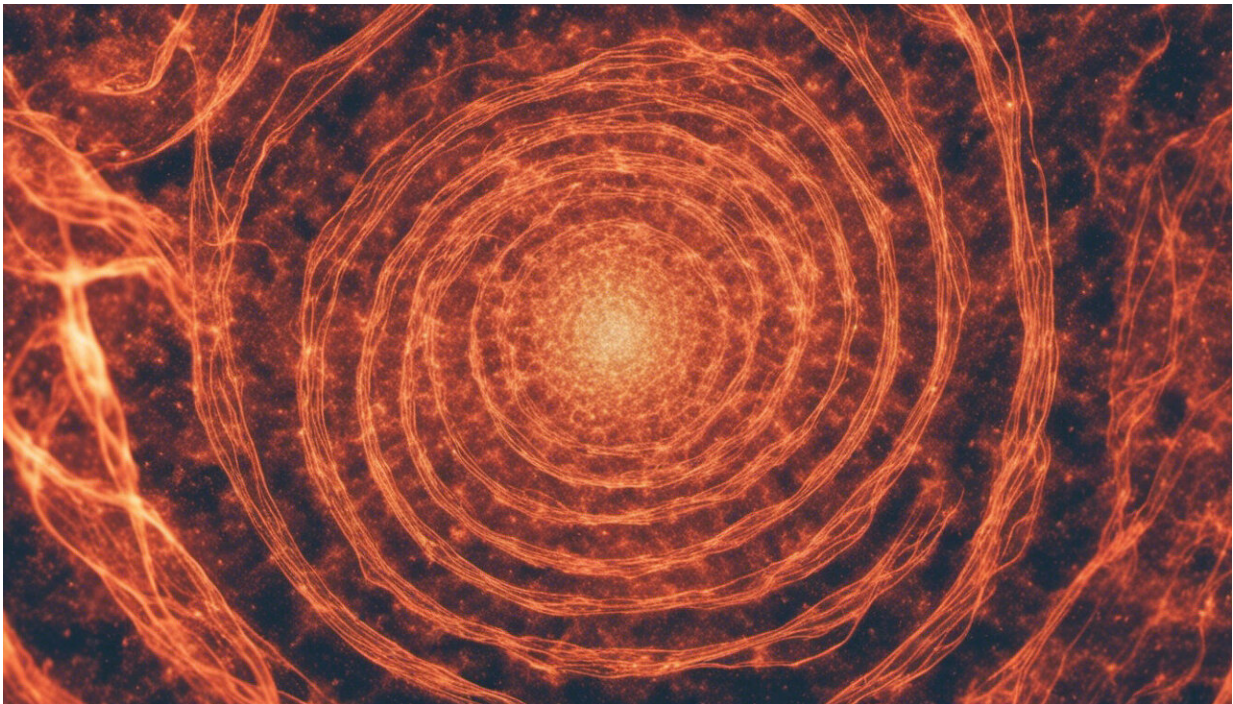


Group therapy most effective treatment for anxiety in young people

November 2 2018



Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

Group cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) could be the best choice of psychotherapy for anxiety disorders in children and adolescents, according to a new network meta-analysis study from Oxford University, Department of Psychiatry.

CBT is a talking therapy designed to help people manage problems by encouraging positive changes in the way they think and behave. It is widely used to treat anxiety and depression, as well as other mental and physical health problems, especially in adults, as it is designed to help people to deal with overwhelming problems in a more positive way by breaking them down into smaller parts.

The new study showed that only group CBT was significantly more effective in reducing [anxiety symptoms](#) than other psychotherapies and all control conditions immediately after treatment and at short term follow up.

It is believed that psychotherapy delivered in a group format may generally result in better outcomes for patients due to the additional exposure of social stimuli and interaction within the group format.

The study's author, Professor Andrea Cipriani of Oxford University's Department of Psychiatry, said: "This study is encouraging because it shows that there is real benefit in long-established psychological treatments for [anxiety](#) disorders in adolescents.

"Ongoing debate regarding the different components and format of psychotherapy leads to uncertainty in the decision making for [health care professionals](#) and patients, and this may help to create clearer guidance for healthcare professionals. We need to assess long term effect of psychotherapies and more research is needed to replicate these findings and explore specific treatment effect and outcomes for different patient populations."

The study included 101 unique [randomized clinical trials](#) (about 7,000 participants) that compared any structured psychotherapy with another psychotherapy or a control condition for [anxiety disorders](#) in children and adolescents. It found also that CBT, delivered in different ways, was

significantly beneficial compared with placebo or waiting list in terms of improving children's and adolescent's quality of life and functional improvement.

The full paper, "Different Types and Acceptability of Psychotherapies for Acute Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents," is published in *JAMA Psychiatry*.

More information: Xinyu Zhou et al. Different Types and Acceptability of Psychotherapies for Acute Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents, *JAMA Psychiatry* (2018). [DOI: 10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2018.3070](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2018.3070)

Provided by University of Oxford

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