

Phone-based therapy beneficial for depression in Parkinson's disease

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Telephone-based cognitive behavioral therapy (T-CBT) seems to be an

effective intervention for depression in Parkinson disease (PD), outperforming treatment-as-usual (TAU) on all depression, anxiety, and quality-of-life measures, according to a study published online April 1 in *Neurology*.

Roseanne D. Dobkin, Ph.D., from Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in Piscataway, New Jersey, and colleagues examined the efficacy of a 10-session T-CBT intervention for [depression](#) in PD compared to TAU in a [randomized controlled trial](#) involving 72 patients with PD. T-CBT was tailored to the unique needs of patients with PD and was provided weekly for three months, then monthly during six-month follow-up. CBT targeted negative thoughts and behaviors.

The researchers found that on all depression, anxiety, and quality-of-life measures, T-CBT outperformed TAU. By treatment end, the primary outcome (Hamilton Depression Rating Scale score) improved significantly in T-CBT versus TAU, with a mean improvement from baseline of 6.53 and –0.27 points, respectively; the gains persisted during six months of follow-up. In the T-CBT group only, improvements were moderated by a reduction in negative thoughts, reflecting treatment target engagement.

"While preliminary, these findings support the promise of telemedicine to expand the reach of evidence-based, PD-informed depression treatment, and its substantial benefits for PD self-management, into routine neurologic care," the authors write.

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