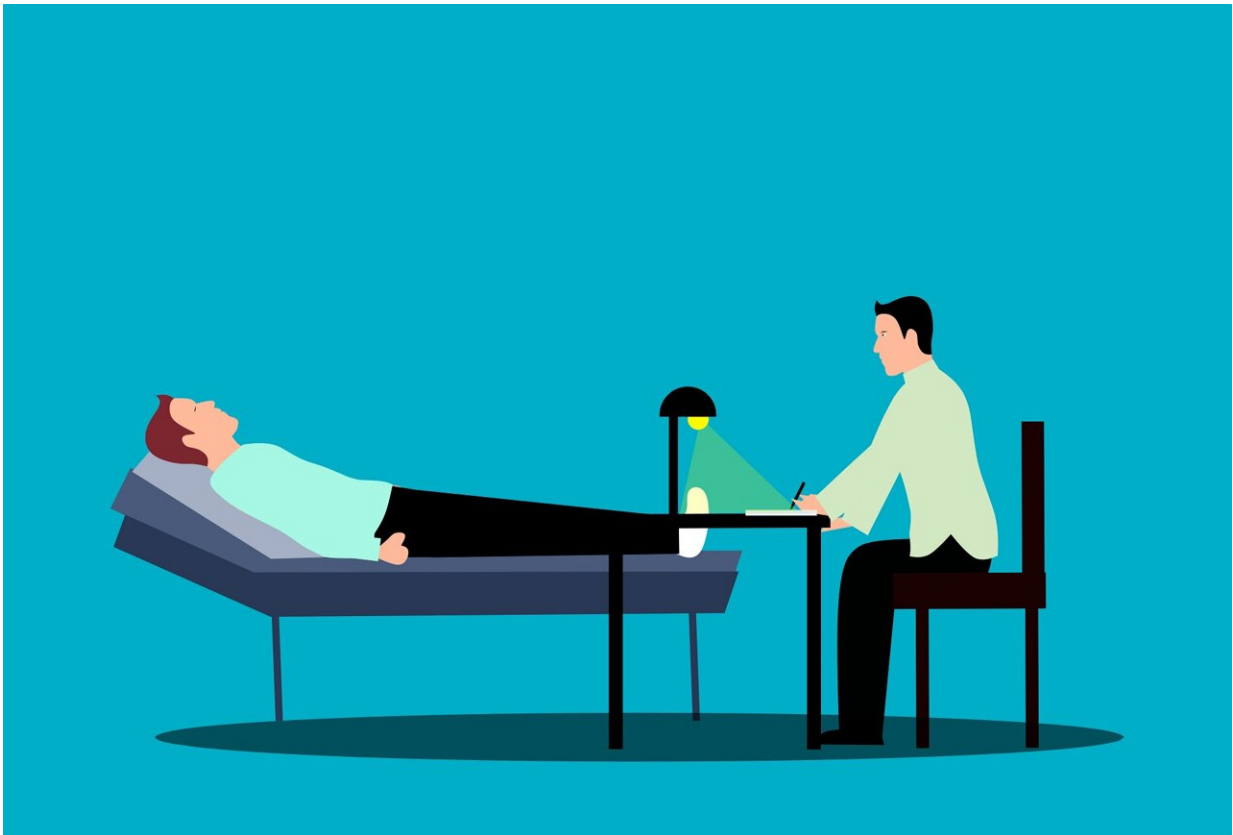


# Enhanced cognitive behavioral therapy can radically reduce long-term depression

March 29 2022, by Michael Addelman

---



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Enhanced versions of the most commonly used talking therapy for depression significantly reduces the illness beyond six months, a meta study of over 15,000 people has concluded.

The assessment of data from 157 studies of cognitive behavioral therapy led by University of Manchester and University of South Wales scientists is published today in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*.

The study compared CBT alone and with one or two additional components such as social skills training, assertiveness training, relaxation techniques and psychoeducation.

All three protocols, they found, reduced [depressive symptoms](#) by a substantial 8.44 points on the Beck Depression Inventory, a 21 item self-reporting scale which measures symptoms of [depression](#).

However only CBT with one or two additional components sustained the effects in the long-term, reducing depression to at least 5 or 8 points respectively after 6 months when compared to CBT alone.

In addition, CBT given with two extra components was more effective when delivered by non-mental health specialists such as [nurses](#).

Age also appeared to affect the effectiveness of CBT: participants younger than 30 and younger than 59 responded better to CBT with two or one extra components respectively.

And the analyses also demonstrated that participants from lower socio-[economic status](#) responded better to CBT with two or one extra components.

Lead author Dr. Ioannis Angelakis said: "Depression is the most common mental health condition with more than 264 million people being affected worldwide.

"It impacts negatively on people's quality of life and is very costly for health and care systems, so understanding how to best to treat it is

paramount.

"Our study shows that CBT can significantly reduce depression after treatment, however when given with one or two extra components it becomes effective in the long term."

He added: "When enhanced CBT is given to [younger people](#), [policy makers](#) should also focus on supporting non [mental health professionals](#) in giving this extra help.

"A nurse providing enhancements may also play the role of the main care coordinator for wider range of health problems.

"That could explain why enhanced CBT seems more effective when they deliver it however more research is needed to understand this more fully."

**More information:** Ioannis Angelakis et al, Effectiveness of cognitive–behavioural therapies of varying complexity in reducing depression in adults: systematic review and network meta-analysis, *The British Journal of Psychiatry* (2022). [DOI: 10.1192/bjp.2022.35](https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2022.35). [www.cambridge.org/core/journal ... 64D815BE5E7E0FCA0A6D](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journal/64D815BE5E7E0FCA0A6D)

Provided by University of Manchester

Citation: Enhanced cognitive behavioral therapy can radically reduce long-term depression (2022, March 29) retrieved 21 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-03-cognitive-behavioral-therapy-radically-long-term.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.