

Transcendental meditation helps to alleviate burnout in academic physicians

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Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a viable and effective intervention to

decrease burnout and depression among academic physicians, according to a study published online Jan. 26 in the *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*.

Marie Loiselle, Ph.D., from Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa, and colleagues studied the effects of the TM technique on academic physician burnout and depression. The analysis included 40 academic physicians (15 specialties) at a [medical school](#) and affiliated Veterans Affairs hospital, randomly assigned to TM or a [control group](#). Researchers measured physicians on the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Beck Depression Inventory, Insomnia Severity Index, Perceived Stress Scale, and Brief Resilience Scale at baseline, one month, and four months. Qualitative interviews were also conducted at baseline and four months.

The authors observed significant improvements in the TM group versus controls at four months for total burnout, including the Maslach Burnout Inventory dimensions of emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depression. Findings from qualitative interviews supported quantitative outcomes, with those physicians regularly practicing the TM technique reporting relief from classic burnout and depression symptoms reported at baseline. The control group did not show similar changes.

"Larger [longitudinal studies](#) with a wider range of health care providers are needed to validate these findings for extrapolation to the greater medical community," the authors write.

More information: Marie Loiselle et al, Effects of Transcendental Meditation on Academic Physician Burnout and Depression: A Mixed Methods Randomized Controlled Trial, *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions* (2023). [DOI: 10.1097/CEH.0000000000000472](#)

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