

# Psychological therapies may help older adults with chronic pain

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(HealthDay)—For older adults with chronic pain, psychological

interventions have small benefits, including reducing pain and catastrophizing beliefs, according to a review published online May 7 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Bahar Niknejad, M.D., from the Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, and colleagues extracted data from 22 studies with 2,608 participants to examine the efficacy of [psychological interventions](#) in older adults (60+ years) with chronic pain.

The researchers found that there were differences of standardized mean differences at post-treatment for [pain intensity](#) (P = 0.006), pain interference (P = 0.12), depressive symptoms (P = 0.14), anxiety (P = 0.09), catastrophizing beliefs (P = 0.046), self-efficacy (P = 0.02), physical function (P = 0.96), and physical health (P = 0.24). For pain only, there was evidence of effects persisting beyond the post-treatment assessment. Only mode of therapy (group versus individual) had a consistent effect in favor of group-based therapy in moderator analyses.

"Psychological interventions for the treatment of chronic pain in older adults have small benefits, including reducing pain and catastrophizing beliefs and improving pain self-efficacy for managing pain. These results were strongest when delivered using group-based approaches," the authors write. "Research is needed to develop and test strategies that enhance the efficacy of psychological approaches and sustainability of treatment effects among [older adults](#) with [chronic pain](#)."

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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