

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy For Depression and Anxiety Disorders

Review 11

Peng, X. D., Huang, C. Q., Chen, L. J., & Zu, Z. C. (2009). CBT and reminiscence techniques for the treatment of depression in the elderly: A systematic review. *The Journal of International Medical Research*, 37, 975–982. PubMed abstract available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19761679>.

Objectives	Assess the efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), reminiscence therapy, and general psychotherapy (GPT) for treating depression in elderly people.
Studies Included	Fourteen U.S. and international studies from 1982 to 2007
Participants in the Studies	Elderly adults (55 or older) diagnosed with depression or concomitant physical illness
Settings	Settings were not reported for all the studies.
Outcomes	Symptoms of depression (self-rated and clinician-rated) and dropout rates
Limitations of the Studies	Only using published reports may lead to publication bias since trials reporting positive results are more likely to be published than negative trials; outcomes were limited to depression scores, so it is unclear whether treatment impacted other aspects of depression, such as remission/nonremission, response/nonresponse, or suicidal thoughts; findings reported here are based on a small sample size.

Results

CBT, reminiscence therapy (i.e., an intervention that uses recall of past events, feelings, and thoughts to facilitate pleasure, quality of life, and adaption to the present), and general psychotherapy were compared in their effectiveness in treating depression symptoms. All three types of psychotherapy were found to be effective treatments for depression in older patients. Specifically, each individual therapy format was significantly more effective than placebo or no intervention. CBT and reminiscence therapy had similar efficacy in treating depression in the elderly. Psychotherapy as an adjunct to antidepressant medication did not significantly increase the efficacy of antidepressants. Overall, the results confirm the efficacy of psychotherapy for treating depression in the elderly.