

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Mindfulness for Patients with Chronic Pain: A Review

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INTRO

Chronic pain is a complex condition that persists for an extended period and becomes central in a person's life, losing its function as an alert. This condition is a significant global health issue, affecting around 20% of the adult population.

METHODS

It was conducted a search of existing literature in Scholar Google and PubMed databases, using the following keywords: "chronic pain," "acceptance and commitment therapy," "mindfulness". Inclusion criteria were defined as articles published within the last five years.

RESULTS

In the 25 analyzed articles, favorable results were found for the moderate and mild efficacy of ACT and mindfulness for patients with chronic pain.

DISCUSSION

The articles analyzed showed that Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Mindfulness has been shown to be effective for chronic pain management. Several systematic reviews and meta-analyses indicate that ACT can significantly improve pain acceptance and psychological flexibility.

ACT can significantly improve pain acceptance and psychological flexibility. Moderate to large effects have been observed in reducing anxiety and depression. Some studies also highlight immediate benefits in patient functioning.

The meta-analysis of mindfulness interventions for chronic pain shows that the practice may have a positive, though small, effect on reducing pain symptoms. The research also indicates significant improvements in depression symptoms and in the quality of life related to physical and mental health.

Mindfulness combined with Acceptance and Commitment Therapy has proven effective in changing negative and dysfunctional thoughts related to pain, in the perception of pain intensity, in comorbidity with depression and anxiety, in quality of life, and in patients' feelings of incapacity. Thus, it contributes to reducing suffering and improving overall well-being.

Some studies showed limitations in the evidence, for example, the overall quality of the evidence is considered low due to heterogeneity among studies and other methodological limitations. However, despite the promising results on the efficacy of ACT and Mindfulness in patients with chronic pain, more evidence is still needed

References:

