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Self-efficacy Reduces Stress in Psychotic Patients

A new training program on specific self-efficacy reduces stress in patients with schizophrenia

By Smaranda Biliuti, News Editor July 8th, 2010, 10:28 GMT

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ENLARGE

Researchers at the University of Granada carried out a study that relates stress reduction to an improvement in psychotic symptoms. This proves that schizophrenic patients' quality of life can be improved with an adequate psychological intervention.

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Scientists tested a self-designed training program on 14 patients diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder. A control group that did not receive any training was established, and patients' evolution was evaluated three and six months after implementation.

The program included 15 training sessions. First of all, patients were trained on general self-efficacy and then on specific self-efficacy to allow them to get skills to deal with stress. The second training period had sessions about learning how to deal with interpersonal difficulties and family conflicts, improving the biomedical/psychological treatment, coping with the symptoms and hallucinations, avoiding negative thinking and preventing and dealing with stress on a daily basis.

At the end of the training program, patients perception of their own self-efficacy increased and a change of 171.8 percent was noticed. There was also a big reduction of negative, affective and psychotic symptoms and of disorientation and confusion. Most patients had high levels of wellness, 22.6 percent more than patients from the control group, and they expressed their satisfaction about these changes.

Patients from the control group did not report any improvement in their self-efficacy to deal with stress perception, not in their psychotic symptoms. They got lower scores that the intervention group in levels of wellness change and general satisfaction. The results were the same for the two successive evaluations, with improvements for patients having participated in the training sessions.

The research was conducted by Maria Luisa Vázquez Pérez, from the Department of Personality, Evaluation and Psychological Treatment of the University of Granada and the study was led by professors Juan F. Godoy García and Débora Godoy Izquierdo. This training program is a first in its field.

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