

An enhancement of standard cognitive behavior therapy for depression has been found.

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A new psychotherapeutic ingredient, emotion regulation skills training, has been found to enhance standard cognitive behavior therapy for depression in a trial published in the current issue of Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics.

Deficits in emotion regulation skills are possible factors maintaining major depressive disorder (MDD). Therefore, the aim of the study was to test whether integrating a systematic emotion regulation training (ERT) enhances the efficacy of routine inpatient cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for MDD.

In a prospective randomized controlled trial, 432 inpatients meeting criteria for MDD were assigned to receive either routine CBT or CBT enriched with an intense emotion regulation skills training (CBT-ERT).

Participants in the CBT-ERT condition demonstrated a significantly greater reduction in depression (response rates - CBT: 75.5%, CBT-ERT: 84.9%; remission rates - CBT: 51.1%, CBT-ERT: 65.1%).

Moreover, CBT-ERT participants demonstrated a significantly greater reduction of negative affect, as well as a greater increase of well-being and emotion regulation skills particularly relevant for mental health.

Integrating strategies that target emotion regulation skills improves the efficacy of CBT for MDD.

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