MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION FOR THE TREATMENT OF FIBROMYALGIA – A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND META-ANALYSIS

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Introduction

Mindfulness-based interventions, such as e.g. MBSR (mindfulness based stress reduction) a structured 8-week group program, have demonstrated beneficial effects in patients suffering from chronic conditions.

These effects are strongest on psychological variables and demonstrate an increase in coping abilities due to these interventions. Several trials have been conducted for patients suffering from fibromyalgia with varying results.

Methods

We performed a systematic quantitative review on the effects of mindfulness-based interventions on fibromyalgia. An extensive literature research and identified 233 relevant abstracts which were assessed for inclusion criteria. We extracted different variables out of included studies in order to perform a quantitative review.

Results

Overall 11 studies fulfilled inclusion criteria, 6 out of them were controlled, and 4 RCTs. Control conditions were either usual care or an active control procedure. The dataset for several different variables was homogenous. In controlled studies we could identify small effect sizes in the range of d=0.20 for pain related variables in the range of d=0.30 for health related quality of life and in the range of d=0.20 for depression.

Conclusions

Overall results show a slight benefit of mindfulness-based intervention compared to controls which is at the brink of significance. The identified effect sizes are rather small and it can be doubted whether they also reflect a clinical significance.