



Insufficient evidence for hypnotherapy in smoking cessation

Clinical question

How effective is hypnotherapy for smoking cessation?

Bottom line

There is insufficient evidence to recommend hypnotherapy as a specific treatment for smoking cessation. There is no evidence of a greater effect with hypnotherapy when compared with rapid/focused smoking or psychological treatment. Direct comparisons of hypnotherapy with cessation treatments considered to be effective had confidence intervals that were too wide to infer equivalence. The main outcome measure was abstinence from smoking for at least six months'.

Caveat

There was significant heterogeneity between the results of the individual studies, with conflicting results for the effectiveness of hypnotherapy compared with no treatment or advice, or psychological treatment. Studies were very diverse so could not be combined in a single meta-analysis.

Context

Different types of hypnotherapy are used to try to help people quit smoking. Methods try to weaken people's desire to smoke or strengthen their will to quit, or help them concentrate on a "quit programme".

Cochrane Systematic Review

Barnes J et al. Hypnotherapy for smoking cessation. Cochrane Reviews, 2010, Issue 10. Article No. CD001008. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD001008.pub2.

This review contains 11 studies involving 1120 participants.

PEARLS No. 293, December 2010, written by Brian R McAvoy.

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