

Mindfulness intervention for people with diabetes and coronary heart disease

May 30 2014, by Taylor & Francis

Mindfulness-based interventions have been hailed as effective in targeting negative cognitions such as worry and thought suppression, but their ability to improve long-term conditions (LTCs) has remained unexamined. In the Open Access article, "A Mixed-Methods Pilot Study of the Acceptability and Effectiveness of a Brief Meditation and Mindfulness Intervention for People with Diabetes and Coronary Heart Disease," published in *Behavioral Medicine*, researchers examine how meditation and mindfulness affect people with diabetes mellitus and coronary heart disease.

Mindfulness, as defined by the study, is a "heightened sense of present centered self-awareness that fosters non-judgmental observations of emotions, bodily states, and other sensations in the attentional field, leading to mental well being." The study used a sequential mixed methods approach that measured change in worry and thought suppression, and qualitatively explored acceptability, feasibility, and user experience with a focus group and in-depth interviews.

On the importance of mindfulness in improving the health of people with long term conditions, lead author Dr. Peter Coventry has said, "mindfulness based interventions appear to be an acceptable and effective way for some people with long term conditions to regain a sense of balance and self-determination in their lives by allowing them to accept their limitations and focus on what is achievable in the present rather than worrying about the past or what they might not be able to do in the future. In this sense it is a means to help people self-manage their

illness and it has the potential to offer people long term benefits if practiced regularly and built into their daily routines."

Meditation and mindfulness skills led to improved sleep, greater relaxation, and more-accepting approaches to illness and illness experience. At the end of the six-week [meditation](#) course, worry and thought suppression were significantly reduced. Long term effects were not studied. Overall, however, the data suggest that meditation and mindfulness may have been particularly useful during the early phase of LTCs or immediately after an acute event, when participants' perceived that anxiety and worry were more potent health threats. There is scope to investigate optimal timing of meditation and [mindfulness training](#) for people with long term conditions.

This study features supplemental materials—click on the supplemental material option in the Open Access box of the article page to find: 1.) an introduction to meditation for health and well-being; 2.) a guide to aid those participating in the meditation sessions and an overview of what some of the sessions entail; 3.) the "Focus Group Topic Guide"; and 4.) the "Interview Topic Guide". With the evidence base in the topic of mindfulness still emerging, the authors felt it important to offer transparent and reproducible content about the intervention, so providing access to the [mindfulness](#) manual is essential to the process.

More information: The complete article is available online: www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08964289.2013.834865

Provided by Taylor & Francis

Citation: Mindfulness intervention for people with diabetes and coronary heart disease (2014, May 30) retrieved 15 January 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-05-mindfulness->

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