



Review of the international hypnosis literature

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Review of the international hypnosis literature

Cesari, P., Modenese, M., Benedetti, S., Emadi Andani, M., & Fiorio, M. (2020). Hypnosis-induced modulation of corticospinal excitability during motor imagery. *Scientific Reports*, 10(1), 16882. doi:10.1038/s41598-020-74020-0.

The authors present an interesting new study on the neurophysiology of how hypnosis affects motoric neural activity of the brain and the peripheral nervous system. Thirty high and low hypnotizable participants each received transcranial magnetic stimulation of their left cerebral hemisphere and were asked to imagine making finger movements using their right hand. In a second condition, the participants were asked to imagine making the movements without actually engaging in them. High and low hypnotizables were asked to perform both conditions with and without hypnosis. The authors also employed a measure of trait suggestibility and intrinsic motivation to examine whether there might be dispositional indicators predictive of the phenomena. The authors measured the electromyographic potential associated with the right hand to look at the evoked potentials associated with the trials. The authors stated that their findings suggest that the highs were able to experience the imagery “more effectively than the lows and that, through imagery, cortical activation was increased due to hypnotic suggestion.” Address for reprints: Paola Cesari, Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, University of Verona, Via Casorati, 43, 37131, Verona, Italy. E-Mail address: paola.cesari@univr.it

Facco, E., Bacci, C., & Zanette, G. (2021). Hypnosis as sole anesthesia for oral surgery: The egg of Columbus. *The Journal of the American Dental Association*, 152 (9), 756–762. doi:10.1016/j.adaj.2021.04.017.

Hypnosis is an effective, readily available, cost-free tool with no negative effects. The authors contend that it should be used more in dentistry. Patients can be helped with procedural anxiety, phobias, and pain. Here, three patients each use hypnosis, instead of anesthesia, for two surgical dental procedures. In each case, hypnotic analgesia was achieved in less than 9 minutes. Patients were relaxed pain-free, and required no post-operative analgesics. Hypnosis can be used as a stand-alone technique in dentistry. Address for reprints: Dr. Enrico Facco, Department of Neurosciences, University of Padua, Via Giustiniani 2, 35128 Padua, Italy. E-Mail address: enrico.facco@unipd.it

Lacy, B. E., Pimentel, M., Brenner, D. M., Chey, W. D., Keefer, L. A., Long, M. D., & Moshiree, B. (2021). ACG clinical guideline: Management of irritable bowel syndrome. *The American Journal of Gastroenterology*, 116(1), 17–44. doi:10.14309/ajg.0000000000001036.

The authors present the first ever American College of Gastroenterology guidelines and recommendations for the treatment of irritable bowel syndrome. The guidelines were derived in consultation with experts who were surveyed to reach a consensus on the diagnosis, treatment, follow-up, and other considerations regarding the treatment of

irritable bowel syndrome. Hypnosis is recommended as a treatment method for irritable bowel syndrome as are other gut-directed psychotherapies. Brian E. Lacy, PhD, MD, FACG. E-Mail address for reprints: lacy.brian@mayo.edu

Vlieger, A. M., & Vermetten, E. V. (2020). Hypnose en hypnotisch taalgebruik [Hypnosis and hypnotic suggestions: Applications in medical disorders]. *Nederlands Tijdschrift Voor Geneeskunde*, 164, D4877.

The authors present a general review of the uses of hypnosis in medicine and in psychiatry. The authors recommend the use of hypnosis particularly for pain management and in managing distress for medical patients. They also discuss the use of hypnosis to help encourage therapeutic aspects of the placebo effect. E-Mail address for reprints: a.vlieger@antoniuziekenhuis.nl

Wallen, G. R., Middleton, K. R., Kazmi, N. B., Yang, L., & Brooks, A. T. (2021). A randomized clinical hypnosis pilot study: Improvements in self-reported pain impact in adults with sickle cell disease. *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, 2021, Article ID 5539004. doi:10.1155/2021/5539004.

Sickle cell disease (SCD) is associated with chronic pain and recurrent acute pain crisis. Much of the current SCD research focuses on the acute pain crisis that result in hospital use and inpatient treatment. This study explored the use of hypnosis to help SCD patients manage their chronic pain, outside of episodes requiring the use of the healthcare system. This randomized, controlled clinical trial collected patient reported outcomes from 31 SCD outpatients at baseline, and 5 and 12 weeks post baseline. The patient reported outcomes were also collected at week 12 and 17 from patients, after the crossover. Patients completed a daily pain diary and were randomized to either the hypnosis intervention group or the education control group. The hypnosis group received 4 weeks of one-on-one hypnosis sessions, that lasted 1–1.5 hours. The sessions involved a hypnotic induction followed by suggestions for analgesia, reduced anxiety, improved sleep, ego-strengthening, and enhanced health and well-being. Participants also received specific suggestions for reducing other symptoms. The next phase of the study involved teaching the participants self-hypnosis, which they were instructed to practice 3–7 per week over the next 6 weeks. The education control group were educated on SCD for the same length and frequency as the experimental group. While the intervention was not found to significantly reduce pain, the data did support a significant decrease in pain impact after a 12-week period. An overall improvement in sleep quality was also found with the hypnotic intervention. This study supports hypnosis as a promising and effective tool for the management of chronic pain – reducing pain severity and pain impact. Address for reprints: Gwennyth, R. Wallen, National Institutes of Health, Clinical Center, Bethesda, MD 20852, USA. E-Mail address: gwallen@cc.nih.gov

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