

Psychological intervention - a critical element of rehabilitation in chronic pulmonary diseases.

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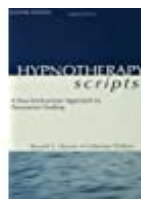
Chronic pulmonary diseases represent a segment of pathology with an increasing prevalence worldwide, this requiring joint efforts from specialists in this field to (a) identify those factors insufficiently explored so far, but critical for their evolution and (b) address them via new therapies. This study aims to explore the existing data regarding the psychological factors involved in the dynamics of chronic pulmonary diseases and the main possibilities of psychological intervention, as a distinct part of pulmonary rehabilitation (PR). 49 articles published on this topic in peer-reviewed journals between 1979 and 2010, indexed in PubMed, ProQuest and EBSCO databases, were examined for evidence. Among psychological factors considered important by study authors were the following: 1) the deficient instruction of the patient, 2) decreased treatment motivation, 3) a marginal social role, 4) a disadaptive cognitive style and 5) psychiatric comorbidity (especially anxiety and depression). Efficient interventions were, for physicians, 1) patient education and 2) designing a personalized self-management plan, and for the clinical psychologists, 1) cognitive-behavioral therapy, 2) biofeedback, 3) family therapy, 4) relaxation and 5) hypnosis. Despite the undeniable effect of these methods in selected cases, the high heterogeneity of designs and personal affiliations of researchers do not allow new generalizations about their efficacy or their routine implementation into PR. Further research including larger samples, more uniform designs, construction of consensual international standards regarding the objectives of PR, and assessments done by experts from multiple study domains could contribute to a better understanding of the role psychological interventions could play in PR.

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