

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy For Depression and Anxiety Disorders

Review 3

Covin, R., Ouimet, A. J., Seeds, P. M., & Dozois, D. J. (2008). A meta-analysis of CBT for pathological worry among clients with GAD. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders, 22*, 108–116. PubMed abstract available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17321717>.

Objectives	Assess the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral behavior (CBT) for generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) by using pathological worry as the outcome measure rather than overall anxiety, and examine the long-term efficacy of CBT.
Studies Included	Ten U.S. and international studies from 1993 to 2004
Participants in the Studies	Adults diagnosed with GAD according to DSM-III-R or DSM-IV criteria
Settings	Settings were not reported for all the studies.
Outcomes	Changes in pathological worry
Limitations of the Studies	Small number of included studies; higher attrition rates among older GAD participants may skew results; strict exclusion criteria may impact generalizability of findings

Results

Included studies in this review used the Penn State Worry Questionnaire to measure pathological worry, which is a fundamental component of GAD. Findings show that CBT for GAD can be an effective treatment for pathological worry. CBT was significantly more effective than the control groups for reducing pathological worry, and reductions were maintained at 1-year follow-up. Individual therapy was more effective than group therapy; however, the benefits of group therapy were well maintained and even showed improvements over time (as measured by follow-up data at 6 and 12 months). Young adults performed better at posttreatment than older adults, but older adults performed well through the follow-up visits, suggesting CBT was effective across age groups at reducing pathological worry.