

- Title** Spiritual Therapy for Mental Disorders
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Aim

The objective of this systematic review was to assess the efficacy / effectiveness, safety and economic implication of spiritual therapy as a complement therapy to standard treatment for patients with mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, mental stress, insomnia or headache.

Conclusions and results

A total of 1105 titles were identified through the Ovid interface and PubMed. Eight articles related to the effect of spiritual therapy on mental disorders were included in this review consisting of one systematic review and seven cross sectional studies. The studies were conducted in United States and United Kingdom.

The majority of the studies were of observational, cross-sectional design which did not allow drawing any definitive conclusions about the causal relationships of the variables. Most of the studies are limited by the nature of the population studied and short duration of study. However, a systematic review showed that Intercessory prayer (IP) may improve health outcomes by lowering severity scores of patients, Islamic-based psychotherapy and religious activities speeds recovery from anxiety and depression in Muslim patients. Most of the studies showed that involvement in religious activities, religious beliefs, spiritual beliefs and practices may promote mental and physical health such as lowering the scores in depression and anxiety. Most of the findings suggested potential benefit namely religious quality involvement was protective through personal and meditative aspects for depression anxiety and schizophrenia. However, the long term effects of spiritual therapy for mental health disorders could not be determined. Hence, there is a need for more research in this area to gauge the beneficial effect of spiritual therapy and religiosity (aspects of religious activity, dedication, and belief), spiritual beliefs and practices has on health outcomes as an adjunctive treatment in patients with mental disorders such as anxiety, depression and schizophrenia

Recommendations (if any)

Based on the above review, there is a need for more research in this area to gauge the beneficial effect of spiritual therapy and religiosity (aspects of religious activity, dedication and belief), spiritual beliefs and practices has on

health outcomes as an adjunctive treatment in patients with mental disorders such as anxiety, depression and schizophrenia.

Spiritual therapy may be used as an adjunct treatment in patients with mental disorders such as anxiety, depression and schizophrenia in a research environment where patients need to be referred by clinicians and the spiritual therapy should be conducted by trained / registered personnel.

Methods

Electronic databases were searched through the Ovid interface: Ovid MEDLINE® In-process and other Non-indexed citations and Ovid MEDLINE® 1948 to present, EBM Reviews - Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials – Mac 2015, EBM Reviews - Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews - 2000 to Mac 2015, EBM Reviews - Health Technology Assessment – 1st Quarter 2015, EBM Reviews - Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects – 1st Quarter 2015, Embase – 1988 to 2015 week 10. Searches were also run in PubMed. Google was used to search for additional web-based materials and information. Additional articles were identified from reviewing the references of retrieved articles. Last search was conducted on 9th Mac 2015.

Further research/reviews required

There is a need for more research in this area to gauge the beneficial effect of spiritual therapy and religiosity (aspects of religious activity, dedication and belief), spiritual beliefs and practices has on health outcomes as an adjunctive treatment in patients with mental disorders such as anxiety, depression and schizophrenia.

Written by

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