

The Effects of Hypnotherapy in Addition to Traditional Medicine on Patients with Acute or Chronic Pain

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PICOT Question

Does hypnotherapy in addition to traditional medicine after 3 months of starting and every 3 months up to 2 years, affect pain management more compared to only pharmacological treatment for patients experiencing acute or chronic pain.

P: Patients experiencing acute or chronic pain, I: Hypnosis with pain medications, C: only pain medications, O: Reduce intensity of pain. T: 3 months after starting hypnosis and every 3 months up to 2 years

Background

- Pharmacological interventions are traditionally the first line treatment for pain but they come with disadvantageous side effects such as dizziness, drowsiness, gastrointestinal irritation, nausea and vomiting, respiratory depression, stupor and loss of consciousness. In addition, with high, long-term doses, they could potentially cause immunosuppressive effects and dependence on the medication (NIDA, 2021). These side effects decrease the client's overall quality of life.
- Hypnotherapy is a heightened state of concentration and focused attention. Guided by a trained, certified hypnotist or hypnotherapist, hypnosis allows the client to be more receptive to suggestions to enact healthful changes in their perceptions, sensations, emotions, memories, thoughts or behaviors. The utilization of hypnotherapy can limit pain by altering the client's perception. The use of hypnotherapy is successful in altering both acute and chronic pain (Elkins et al., 2007).
- Common causes of pain include menstrual pain, surgical procedures, physical injuries, ischemia, and chronic health conditions such as cancer, sickle cell anemia, arthritis, and multiple sclerosis to name a few. Hypnotherapy, when used in conjunction with pharmacological treatments for acute and chronic pain, can potentially result in decreased pain and increased clients' overall quality of life.

Literature Search

Database: CINAHL complete, PubMed, Cochrane, and MEDLINE

Key Terms: "hypnotherapy", "hypnosis," "pain", "pain management"

Inclusion Criteria: Studies published from 2014-2023, from peer reviewed journals, published in English, population of choice aligns with research question, adults with pain

Synthesis of Findings

- Hypnosis in conjunction with traditional medicine was found to have a positive effect in client's quality of life. One randomized controlled trial found that over half of the participants who received hypnosis reported clinically meaningful ($\geq 30\%$) reductions in pain intensity, and they maintained these benefits for at least 6 months after treatment.¹¹
- A systematic review and randomized control trial also found that the use of hypnotherapy in addition to traditional pharmacological treatments significantly decreased pain in comparison to the use of pharmacological treatments alone. However, they indicated a need for more extensive controlled and longitudinal studies be conducted on this topic.^{2, 9}
- Some studies indicated no statistically significant effect in the reduction of pain when used in tandem with pharmacological interventions but stressed the safety of the use of hypnotherapy.^{1, 3, 8, 10}
- Some studies also highlighted positive effects such as the reduction of fatigue, anxiety, and depression. These studies also stated that further more extensive studies should be performed to determine the efficacy of the use of hypnotherapy in treating these conditions.^{2, 10, 1, 3}
- Most studies indicated the need for further studying of the use of hypnotherapy as a complementary therapy to treat clients with acute or chronic pain to find clinical significance.^{9, 1, 3, 7}

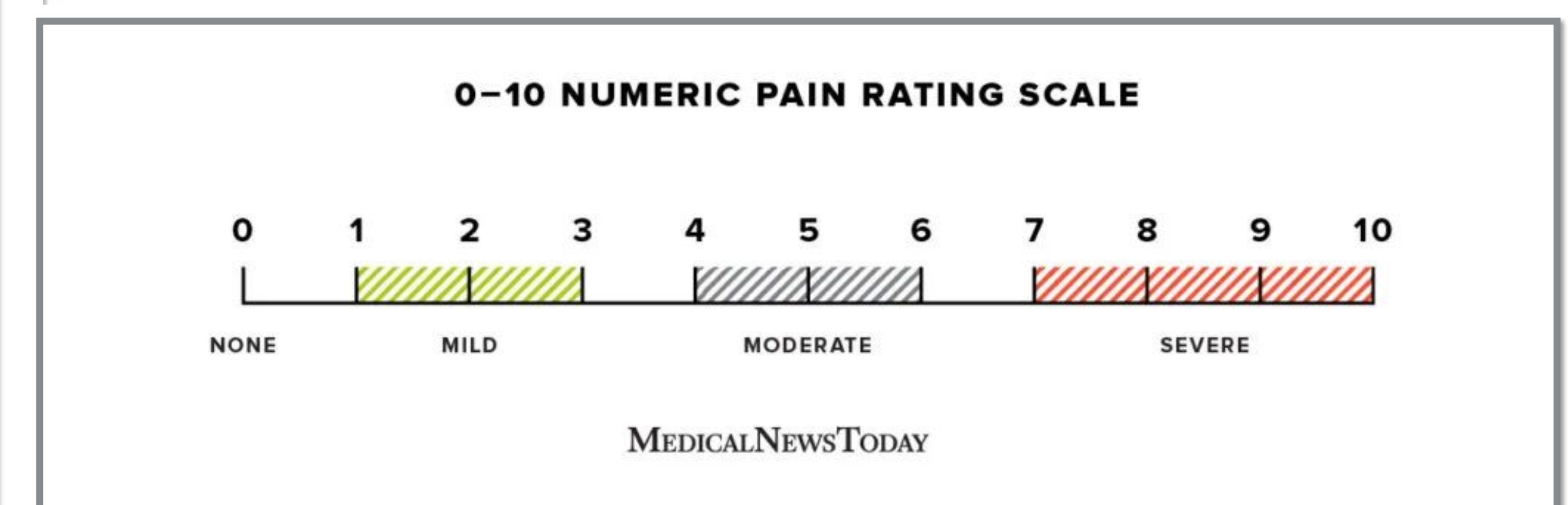
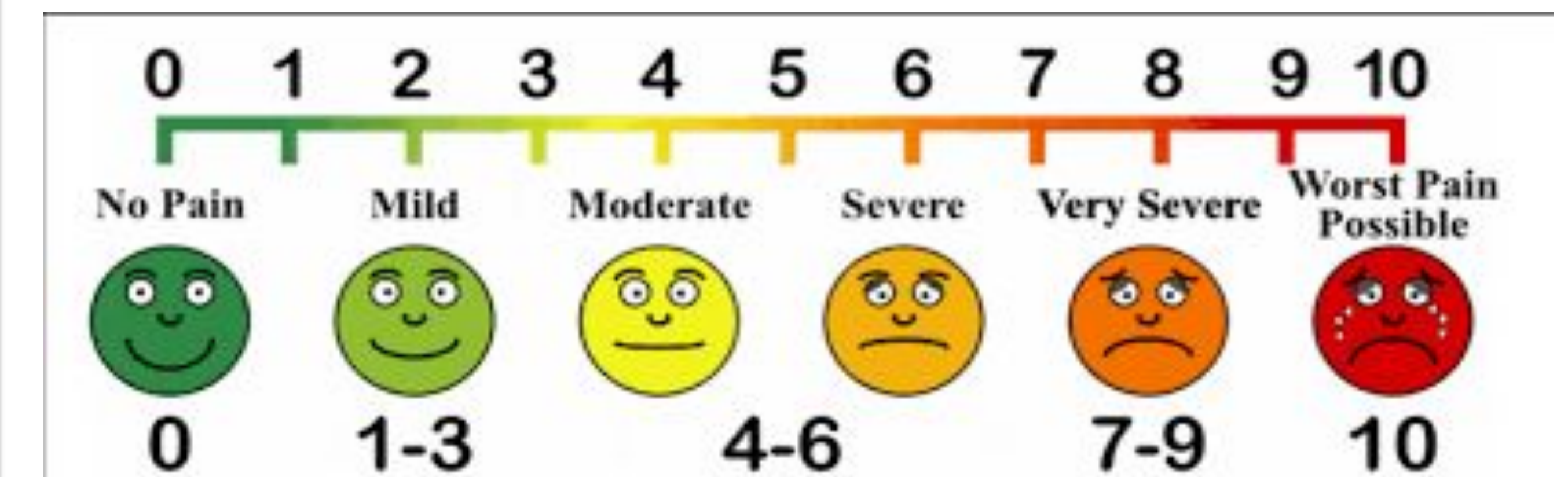


Decision to Change Practice

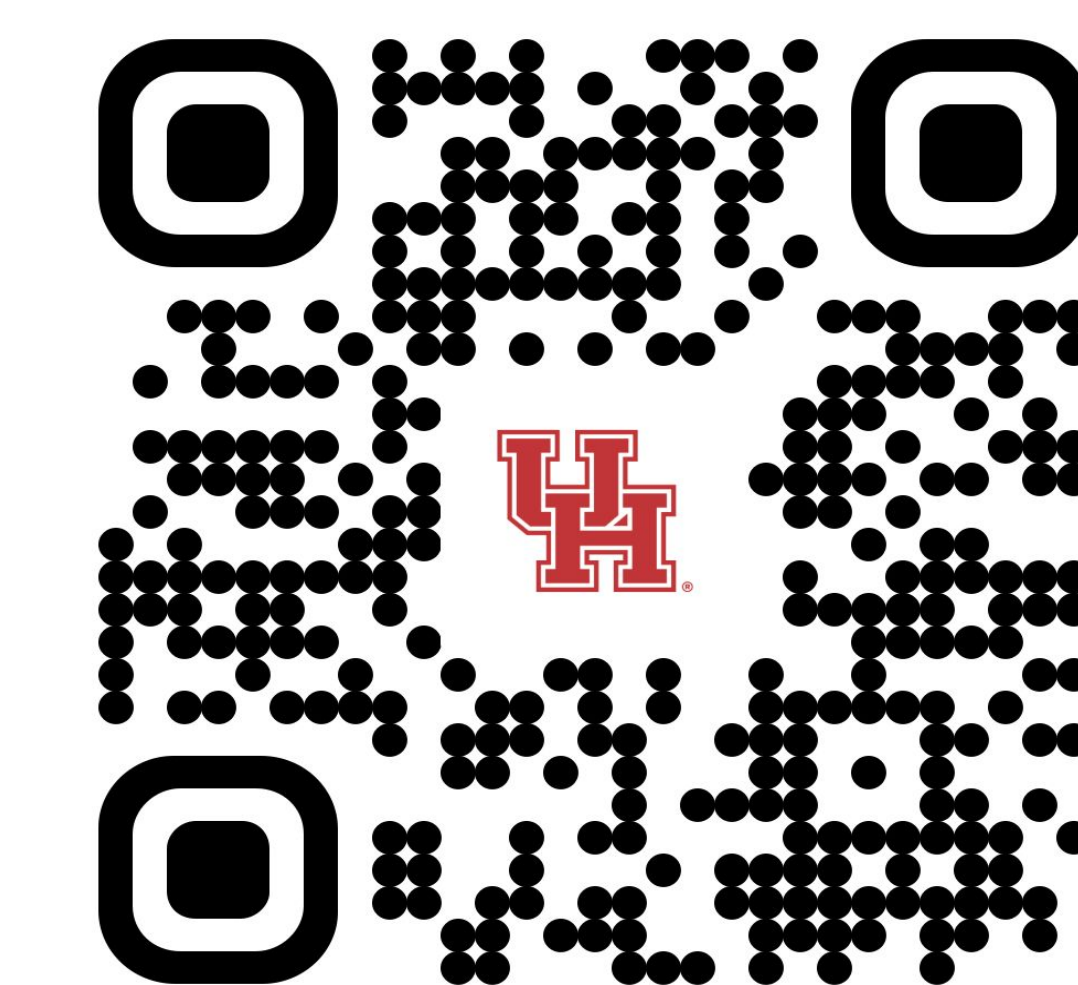
Four of the eight articles analyzed indicated statistically significant reduction of pain with the utilization of hypnosis along with pharmacological analgesic therapies compared to treatments that excluded the use of hypnosis. The remaining four articles recommended further investigations and studies into the field of hypnotherapy but did not conclude that hypnosis was ineffective or unsafe to use in conjunction with traditional pharmacological treatments. We recommend the use of hypnosis along with pharmacological analgesic therapies to control pain intensity. The findings indicate a great need for further controlled and longitudinal studies to definitively assess the efficacy of hypnosis in treatment of pain.

Evaluation and Tools

The tools used to evaluate the effectiveness of hypnosis on pain management are the visual analog scale (VAS) (0-10) and the numerical pain rating scale (NPRS) (0-10). These tools allowed us to organize the data in numerical form and determine the efficacy of the hypnosis therapy on the patient's perception of pain. While pain is subjective, these scales gave us the ability to quantify the severity of the pain before and after hypnotherapy was provided.



References



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