

Statistics on the Effectiveness of Medical Hypnosis



The following is a brief review of some of the research evidence on the effectiveness of hypnosis within this document.

- Pain & Health Management, Pre-Post Surgery using Hypnotherapy
- Other Studies & Reviews on Cancer and the Immune Systems
- Hypno-Analgesia as a Control of Pain
- Weight Loss Under Hypnotherapy (90% Success)
- Smoking Cessation (81% to 90.6% Success)
- Addictions, Alcohol and Impulsivity using Hypnotherapy (77% to 94%)
- References & Notes

Patients and doctors may have misperceptions about hypnosis. They may not realize it is supported by scientific evidence. “Physicians may be unfamiliar with hypnosis, because it's not taught in medical school and they may not read about it in journals,” said Janet Konefal, assistant dean for complementary and integrative medicine at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. More and better studies on medical hypnotherapy are needed by reputable trained, clinicians to generate enough scientific studies leading to evidence that expands confidence in the continued use of hypnotherapy.

The following are a few studies that I have found. As an aside, sessions for medical hypnotherapy in general take about an hour, (I have seen it performed in 15 minutes, but I don't use that process). Some conditions, such as IBS may take longer. Medical hypnotherapy is supported to some degree by most insurance carriers, including Medicare.

PAIN & HEALTH MANAGEMENT, PRE-POST SURGERY USING HYPNOTHERAPY

- **Hypnosis Reduces Frequency and Intensity of Migraines** This study compared the treatment of migraine by hypnosis and autohypnosis with the treatment of migraine by the drug prochlorperazine (Stemetil). Results show that the number of attacks and the number of people who suffered blinding attacks were significantly lower for the group receiving hypnotherapy than for the group receiving prochlorperazine. For the group on hypnotherapy, these two measures were significantly lower when on hypnotherapy

than when on the previous treatment. It is concluded that further trials of hypnotherapy are justified against some other treatment not solely associated with the ingestion of tablets. [1]

- **Hypnosis Reduces Pain and Speeds up Recovery from Surgery** Since 1992, we have used hypnosis routinely in more than 1400 patients undergoing surgery. We found that hypnosis used with patients as an adjunct to conscious sedation and local anesthesia was associated with improved intraoperative patient comfort, and with reduced anxiety, pain, intraoperative requirements for anxiolytic and analgesic drugs, optimal surgical conditions and a faster recovery of the patient. We reported our clinical experience and our fundamental research. [2]
- **Hypnosis Reduces Pain Intensity** Analysis of the simple-simple main effects, holding both group and condition constant, revealed that application of hypnotic analgesia reduced report of pain intensity significantly more than report of pain unpleasantness. [3]
- **Hypnosis Reduces Pain of Headaches and Anxiety** The improvement was confirmed by the subjective evaluation data gathered with the use of a questionnaire and by a significant reduction in anxiety scores. [4]
- **Hypnosis Lowered Post-Treatment Pain in Burn Injuries** Patients in the hypnosis group reported less post treatment pain than did patients in the control group. The findings are used to replicate earlier studies of burn pain hypnoanalgesia, explain discrepancies in the literature, and highlight the potential importance of motivation with this population. [5]
- **Hypnosis Lowered Phantom Limb Pain** Hypnotic procedures appear to be a useful adjunct to established strategies for the treatment of phantom limb pain and would repay further, more systematic, investigation. Suggestions are provided as to the factors which should be considered for a more systematic research program. [6]
- **Hypnosis Has a Reliable and Significant Impact on Acute and Chronic Pain** Hypnosis has been demonstrated to reduce analogue pain, and studies on the mechanisms of laboratory pain reduction have provided useful applications to clinical populations. Studies showing central nervous system activity during hypnotic procedures offer preliminary information concerning possible physiological mechanisms of hypnotic analgesia. Randomized controlled studies with clinical populations indicate that hypnosis has a reliable and significant impact on acute procedural pain and chronic pain conditions. Methodological issues of this body of research are discussed, as are methods to better integrate hypnosis into comprehensive pain treatment. [7]
- **Hypnosis is a Powerful Tool in Pain Therapy (Biological Addiction/Psychological)** Attempting to elucidate cerebral mechanisms behind hypnotic analgesia, we measured regional cerebral blood flow with positron emission tomography in patients with fibromyalgia, during hypnotically-induced analgesia and resting wakefulness. The patients experienced less pain during hypnosis than at rest. The cerebral blood-flow was bilaterally increased in the orbitofrontal and subcallosal cingulate cortices, the right thalamus, and the left inferior parietal cortex, and was decreased bilaterally in the cingulate cortex. The observed blood-flow pattern supports notions of a multifactorial

nature of hypnotic analgesia, with an interplay between cortical and subcortical brain dynamics. Copyright 1999 European Federation of Chapters of the International Association for the Study of Pain. [8]

- **Hypnosis Useful in Hospital Emergency Rooms** Hypnosis can be a useful adjunct in the emergency department setting. Its efficacy in various clinical applications has been replicated in controlled studies. Application to burns, pain, pediatric procedures, surgery, psychiatric presentations (e.g., coma, somatoform disorder, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress), and obstetric situations (e.g., hyperemesis, labor, and delivery) are described. [9]
- **Fractures Healed Significantly Faster from Surgery** Fractures healed 41% faster from two studies from Harvard Medical School show hypnosis significantly reduces the time it takes to heal. [10]
 1. **Study One** Six weeks after an ankle fracture, those in the hypnosis group showed the equivalent of eight and a half weeks of healing.
 2. **Study Two** Three groups of people studied after breast reduction surgery. Hypnosis group healed "significantly faster" than supportive attention group and control group.

Other Studies & Reviews on Cancer and the Immune Systems

- Journal of the National Cancer Institute, (Vol.99, No. 17), 2007
- Health Psychology (Vol. 20, No.3) 2009
- American Association for the Advancement of Science Conference, 2002
- Effects of Hypnosis on the Immune Response B-cell, T-cell Helper and Suppressor Cells
- American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis (30, 72-79)
- More on Migraines and Hypnotherapy, International Journal of Clinical Experimental Hypnosis, 1975

Hypno-Analgesia Research shows that hypnosis works as part of a treatment program for a number of psychological and medical conditions, with pain relief being one of the most researched areas, as shown in a 2000 study by psychologists Steven Lynn, PhD, Irving Kirsch, PhD, Arreed Barabasz, PhD, Etzel Cardeña, PhD, and David Patterson, PhD. Among the benefits associated with hypnosis is the ability to alter the psychological components of the experience of pain that may then have an effect on even severe pain.

Dr. Patterson and fellow psychologist Mark Jensen, PhD, found that hypno-analgesia is associated with significant reductions in: ratings of pain, need for analgesics or sedation, nausea and vomiting, and length of stay in hospitals. Hypnosis has also been associated with better overall outcome after medical treatment and greater physiological stability. A meta-analysis (a study of studies) in 2000 of 18 published studies by psychologists Guy Montgomery, PhD, Katherine DuHamel, PhD, and William Redd, PhD, showed that 75% of clinical and experimental participants with different types of pain obtained substantial pain relief from

hypnotic techniques. Thus, hypnosis is likely to be effective for most people suffering from diverse forms of pain. Full article from the American Psychological Association [APA](#)

WEIGHT LOSS UNDER HYPNOTHERAPY (90% Success)

- **Hypnosis Over 30 Times as Effective for Weight Loss** Investigated the effects of hypnosis in weight loss for 60 females, at least 20% overweight. Treatment included group hypnosis with metaphors for ego-strengthening, decision making and motivation, ideomotor exploration in individual hypnosis, and group hypnosis with maintenance suggestions. Hypnosis was more effective than a control group: an average of 17 lbs. lost by the hypnosis group vs. an average of 0.5 lbs. lost by the control group, on follow-up. [11]
- **Two Years Later: Hypnosis Subjects Continued to Lose Significant Weight** 109 people completed a behavioral treatment for weight management either with or without the addition of hypnosis. At the end of the 9-week program, both interventions resulted in significant weight reduction. At 8-month and 2-year follow-ups, the hypnosis subjects were found to have continued to lose significant weight, while those in the behavioral-treatment-only group showed little further change. [12]
- **Hypnosis Subjects Lost More Weight Than 90% of Others and Kept it Off** Researchers analyzed 18 studies comparing a cognitive behavioral therapy such as relaxation training, guided imagery, self-monitoring, or goal setting with the same therapy supplemented by hypnosis. Those who received the hypnosis lost more weight than 90 percent of those not receiving hypnosis and maintained the weight loss two years after treatment ended. [13]
- **Hypnosis More Than Doubled Average Weight Loss** Study of the effect of adding hypnosis to cognitive-behavioral treatments for weight reduction, additional data were obtained from authors of two studies. Analyses indicated that the benefits of hypnosis increased substantially over time. [14]
- **Hypnosis Showed Significantly Lower Post-Treatment Weights** Two studies compared overweight smoking and non-smoking adult women in a hypnosis-based, weight-loss program. Both achieved significant weight losses and decreases in Body Mass Index. Follow-up study replicated significant weight losses and declines in Body Mass Index. The overt aversion and hypnosis program yielded significantly lower post-treatment weights and a greater average number of pounds lost. [15]
- **Hypnotherapy Group with Stress Reduction** Subjects achieved significantly more weight loss than the other two treatments. Randomized, controlled, parallel study of two forms of hypnotherapy (directed at stress reduction or energy intake reduction), vs dietary advice alone in 60 obese patients with obstructive sleep apnea on nasal continuous positive airway pressure treatment. [16]
- **Hypnosis can More than Double the Effects** of traditional weight loss approaches An analysis of five weight loss studies reported in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology in 1996 showed that the "... weight loss reported in the five studies indicates that hypnosis can more than double the effects" of traditional weight loss approaches.

[17]

- **Weight loss is greater where hypnosis is utilized** Research into cognitive-behavioral weight loss treatments established that weight loss is greater where hypnosis is utilized. It was also established that the benefits of hypnosis increase over time. [18]
- **Showed Hypnosis As "An Effective Way To Lose Weight"** A study of 60 females who were at least 20% overweight and not involved in other treatment showed hypnosis is an effective way to lose weight. [19]

SMOKING CESSATION (81% TO 90.6% SUCCESS)

- **Success Rate for Smoking Cessation Using Hypnosis: 90.6%** Of 43 consecutive patients undergoing this treatment protocol, 39 reported remaining abstinent from tobacco use at follow-up (6 months to 3 years' post-treatment). This represents a 90.6% success rate using hypnosis. [20]
- **Reported Abstinence from Tobacco Use with Hypnosis: 87%** A field study of 93 males and 93 females CMHC outpatients examined the facilitation of smoking cessation by using hypnosis. At 3-month follow-up, 86% of the men and 87% of the women reported continued abstinence from the use of tobacco using hypnosis. Performance by gender in a stop-smoking program combining hypnosis and aversion. [21]
- **They Had Stopped Smoking After Hypnosis: Reported 81%** Thirty smokers enrolled in an HMO were referred by their primary physician for treatment. Twenty-one patients returned after an initial consultation and received hypnosis for smoking cessation. At the end of treatment, 81% of those patients reported that they had stopped smoking, and 48% reported abstinence at 12 months' post-treatment. [22]
- **Hypnosis Patients Twice As Likely To Remain Smoke-Free After Two Years** Study of 71 smokers showed that after a two-year follow up, patients that quit with hypnosis were twice as likely to remain smoke-free than those who quit on their own. [23]
- **Hypnosis More Effective Than Drug Interventions for Smoking Cessation** Group hypnosis sessions, evaluated at a less effective success rate (22% success) than individualized hypnosis sessions. However, group hypnosis sessions were still demonstrated here as being more effective than drug interventions. [24]
- **Hypnosis More Effective than the Patch --Largest Study Ever** Three Times as Effective as Patch and 15 Times as Effective as Willpower. Hypnosis is the most effective way of giving up smoking, per the largest ever scientific comparison of ways of breaking the habit. A meta-analysis, statistically combining results of more than 600 studies of 72,000 people from America and Europe to compare various methods of quitting. On average, hypnosis was over three times as effective as nicotine replacement methods and 15 times as effective as trying to quit alone. [25]

ADDICTIONS, ALCOHOL AND IMPULSIVITY USING HYPNOTHERAPY (77% TO 94%)

- **Significantly More Methadone Addicts Quit with Hypnosis.** 94% Remained Narcotic

Free. Significant differences were found on all measures. The experimental group had significantly less discomfort and illicit drug use, and a significantly greater amount of cessation. At six month follow up, 94% of the subjects in the experimental group who had achieved cessation remained narcotic free. [26]

- **A Comparative Study of Hypnotherapy and Psychotherapy in the Treatment of Methadone Addicts** Hypnosis Shows 77 Percent Success Rate for Drug Addiction. Treatment has been used with 18 clients over the last 7 years and has shown a 77 percent success rate for at least a 1-year follow-up. 15 were being seen for alcoholism or alcohol abuse, 2 clients were being seen for cocaine addiction, and 1 client had a marijuana addiction [27]
- **Raised Self-esteem & Serenity. Lowered Impulsivity and Anger** In a research study on self-hypnosis for relapse prevention training with chronic drug/alcohol users. Participants were 261 veterans admitted to Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (SARRTPs). individuals who used repeated self-hypnosis "at least 3 to 5 times a week," at 7-week follow-up, reported the highest levels of self-esteem and serenity, and the least anger/impulsivity, in comparison to the minimal-practice and control groups. [28]
- **Hypnosis for Cocaine Addiction Documented Case Study** Hypnosis was successfully used to overcome a \$500 (five grams) per day cocaine addiction. The subject was a female in her twenties. After approximately 8 months of addiction, she decided to use hypnosis to overcome the addiction itself. Over the next 4 months, she used hypnosis three times a day and at the end of this period, her addiction was broken, and she has been drug free for the past 9 years. Hypnosis was the only intervention, and no support network of any kind was available. [29]

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