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A pilot investigation of the effects of relaxation training on objective measures of stress-reactivity and blood glucose control in insulin-dependent diabetes (IDDM): a series of case studies.

Abstract

Previous studies have shown inconsistent effects of relaxation on diabetes control. However, relaxation may only be useful in patients demonstrating stress-blood glucose associations. A series of case-studies was conducted on six individuals, five of whom displayed daily hassles/uplifts-blood glucose associations. Patients were taught relaxation for one month, with assessments at baseline and follow-up. Relaxation had a range of psychological and psychophysiological benefits on all participants including improvements in: HbA1c of more than one per cent (three individuals), stress-blood glucose associations (three individuals), stress-neuroendocrine hormone associations (three individuals) and psychological well-being (three individuals). Although the one individual who did not display hassles/uplifts-blood glucose associations showed no psychophysiological benefit with relaxation training, this individual did show an improvement in well-being scores. The individual differences in response to relaxation on various outcome measures, and the potential use of objective psychophysiological assessment of stress-blood glucose relationship prior to introduction of relaxation training.