

Halpern Scale, and wrist actigraphy. Out of 21 patients recruited, eleven successfully completed the study.

**Results** After the second hypnotherapy session there was a statistically significant reduction in patient-reported anxiety ( $p=0.0066$ ) and symptoms ( $p=0.0094$ ), but not in depression ( $p=0.2910$ ) or sleep disturbance ( $p=0.0868$ ). After the fourth hypnotherapy session, there was a statistically significant reduction in patient-reported anxiety ( $p=0.0016$ ), depression ( $p=0.0466$ ), symptoms ( $p=0.0329$ ) and sleep disturbance ( $p=0.0081$ ). Actigraphy did not show a statistically significant improvement in sleep quality.

**Discussion** Hypnotherapy intervention appears to have a more immediate impact on anxiety and symptom severity whereas the improvement in depression and sleep quality is more slowly acquired. Actigraphy is a new tool to measure the quality of sleep. Its validation is still in progress and thus the sleep indicators chosen for this study are still a subject of debate. This could explain the result inconsistency.

**Conclusion** This study suggests that hypnotherapy can contribute to reduction in anxiety in palliative care patients with the added benefit of improving sleep and severity of psychological and physical symptoms.

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### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HYPNOTHERAPY IN THE TREATMENT OF ANXIETY IN PATIENTS WITH CANCER RECEIVING PALLIATIVE CARE

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**Introduction** In palliative care patients, anxiety is usually attributed to a reaction to diagnosis, treatment and its possible outcomes. Despite the support for hypnotherapy as a resource for the alleviation of psychological and emotional distress, there is a paucity of evidences to support the use of hypnotherapy for symptom relief.

**Aims** Aims of this study were to assess the benefits of hypnotherapy in the management of anxiety in palliative care patients and to ascertain if hypnotherapy could affect other symptoms including depression and sleep disturbance.

**Methods** Participants received four sessions of hypnotherapy and completed the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, Edmonton Symptom Assessment Scale, Verran and Snyder-