

CARDIAC REHABILITATION: ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE IN OLDER INDIVIDUALS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the effect of group-mediated cognitive behavioral interventions (GMCB) in cardiac rehabilitation on the quality of life of older cardiac patients. Both the treatment group (N=11; 64.2 yrs) and control group (N=11; 64 yrs) participated in the aerobic and strength training programming of the phase IV cardiac rehabilitation program. In addition, the treatment group attended weekly GMCB intervention sessions for 12-weeks, with active learning principles focusing on behavior modification and changing attitudes towards health. Changes in psychological health, particularly health-related quality of life, were assessed at baseline and 12-weeks using the SF-36 Item Health Survey, which assesses eight dimensions of quality of life. There was a significant difference in the physical function of the GMCB group as well as improvements in six other dimensions of quality of life ($P < 0.05$). The GMCB group also participated in semi-structured interviews following completion of the intervention. The interviews revealed that participants experienced psychological improvements such as increased self-efficacy and self-esteem, as well as physical performance. These findings demonstrate the GMCB interventions in cardiac rehabilitation may improve the health-related quality of life and psychosocial factors of older cardiac patients.