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Article Details

Title: Internet-delivered obesity treatment improves symptoms of and risk for depression.

Authors:

Source: Obesity (Silver Spring). 2017 Apr;25(4):671-675. doi: 10.1002/oby.21773. Epub 2017 Feb 22.

Relevance Rating: 5.00

Newsworthiness Rating: 4.00

Abstract:

OBJECTIVE: In-person lifestyle interventions for obesity treatment yield significant improvements in depression. These improvements may be attributed to the excellent weight losses produced by in-person interventions. In contrast, Internet programs yield more modest weight losses, and their effect on depression is unknown. This study is the first to examine whether Internet-delivered obesity treatment impacts depressive symptoms. **METHODS:** Participants (N = 136) were randomized to either a community campaign plus Internet behavioral weight loss (IBWL) or community campaign alone (Control). IBWL did not include online social support components. A measure of depressive symptoms was administered, and weight was objectively assessed. **RESULTS:** Of the total sample, 24% met the clinical cutoff for elevated depression risk at baseline. IBWL participants lost more weight during treatment (P = 0.005) and experienced significantly greater improvements in depressive symptoms (P = 0.02). Among participants who met the clinical cutoff for elevated risk for depression at baseline, those assigned to IBWL had greater improvements in depressive symptoms during treatment compared to Control (P = 0.033). Consequently, at post-treatment, a smaller percentage of IBWL participants were at elevated risk for depression. **CONCLUSIONS:** This study is the first to show that Internet-delivered obesity treatment improves depression risk and depressive symptoms in individuals with overweight or obesity.

The full text may be available from [PubMed](#).