Use of Emotional Freedom Technique As a Complementary Pain Management Practice

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Purpose

The purpose of this presentation focuses on an ongoing examination of a self-care strategy patients can utilize to relieve stress and or manage pain. Persons with chronic pain may experience significant stress and loss of control over their lives. High levels of stress and anxiety in chronic pain patients can affect daily functioning as well as negatively influence quality of life. Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) offers an easy to master self-care technique that chronic pain patients can utilize as an alternative or complementary pain management strategy.

Emotional Freedom Technique

EFT is the combination of Acceptance theory and Energy medicine. The patient states 3 times whatever emotion or emotions they are feeling at the beginning tapping point. This is again stated while gently tapping over various acupressure points on their torso. EFT is believed to relieve anxiety because the person is acknowledging what the body already feels and knows. Stating the emotions while gently tapping with fingertip on the acupressure points may release this energy and the person’s anxiety level decreases. Similar to acupuncture, EFT focuses on meridian points to restore balance to the body’s energy. Meridian points are pathways that help balance energy flow and maintain health. While the primary pain response is the brain’s response to the original injury, the secondary pain response involves the mind’s interpretation of the primary pain response. Hyperalgesia represents a lowering of the nociceceptor threshold that may persist long after the initial cause for pain has disappeared. Secondary pain responses are frequently accompanied by increased anxiety and stress levels as the person experiences not only physical but also psychic distress. EFT works to reverse the pain cycle by restoring the body’s energy balance.

Conclusions

EFT can be used as a stress-reduction, self-management strategy for persons suffering with chronic pain. This is a nonpharmacologic approach, not requiring a provider order, is easily learned, unobtrusive when using, and requires no special equipment. It is a technique nurses can teach their patients.

Title:

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Keywords:

Chronic Pain, Emotional Freedom Technique and Self-Care
References:


Abstract Summary:
Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) has been used to reduce stress and anxiety in patients. Stress and anxiety contribute to physical changes in the body used to measure pain.

**Content Outline:**

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) has been shown to be an effective self care tool. For example, it has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety in nursing students. As well as a tool used in the treatment of PTSD.

EFT is a combination of Acceptance theory and Energy medicine. EFT is gentle finger tapping on strategic points. Many points are the same as the points used in acupuncture.

Pain has many components and many different tools etc have been used to measure pain. The many components of pain vary in patients. There is an increasing area of interest in the emotional component to pain and pain management.

Self care and self management of health, also are of increasing interest in our health care system.

The increasing cost of health care has contributed to some of the interest in finding alternatives to more expensive treatments.

The opioid crisis as well is a major factor fueling the need to find alternative pain management options.

This presentation focuses on an ongoing project examining the effectiveness of EFT in persons who experience chronic pain.

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