Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Helps HIV-Positive Smokers Quit

A recent study sought to treat anxiety and depression in addition to providing standard smoking cessation treatment.

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A combination of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and standard smoking cessation treatments is far more effective at getting HIV-positive smokers to quit than standard treatment alone, aidsmap reports.

Publishing their findings in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes, researchers enrolled 53 smokers living with HIV in Boston who expressed at least a moderate desire to quit cigarettes.

The participants were randomly assigned to: 1) receive nine weekly sessions of CBT meant to help with smoking cessation and treat anxiety and depression (26 people); or 2) to receive four brief weekly smoking cessation treatment check-in sessions (27 people). All participants received nicotine replacement therapy as well as an educational session before being randomized into either group.

At the end of the study, 59 percent of those in the CBT intervention group and 9 percent of those in the control group were abstinent from cigarettes, rates that declined to 46 percent and 5 percent, respectively, after six months.

After adjusting the data to account for various factors, the researchers found that the CBT intervention was associated with a reduction in the severity of depression and anxiety both at the end of the study and six months later.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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