

LONG-TERM OUTCOME OF A MULTIDISCIPLINARY REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME: A ONE-YEAR FOLLOW-UP STUDY

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Objective: To evaluate the long-term outcome of a multidisciplinary rehabilitation program for patients with chronic fatigue syndrome.

Method: 98 patients fulfilling chronic fatigue syndrome criteria (Fukuda) participated at a six-month CBT associated with GET based on adaptive pacing strategy in a group therapy and were included in a prospective outcome study at the university outpatient Chronic Fatigue Reference Center.

Measures: Multidimensional assessments at baseline, after treatment and at 6 and 12 months follow-up : Checklist Individual Strength; Epworth Sleepiness Scale; Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index; HADS; Symptom Checklist; Short Form General Health Survey and Self Efficacy Scale.

Results: After the revalidation program, subjective outcome parameters as fatigue severity, concentration troubles, somatic complaints, sleep disturbances and behavioral consequences of fatigue as activity reduction improve significantly ($p < 0,001$). The QoL related to health perception, measured in items as vitality, role-physical limitations and social functioning, also improve significantly ($p < 0,001$). Treatment doesn't change HADS-scales but the scores don't differ significantly from a healthy population at baseline. At 6 and 12 months follow-up, we didn't notice significant decreases in outcome results. Significant improvements correlate significantly with an increase of sense of control of the symptoms (Self Efficacy Scale).

Conclusions: Symptoms, health-related QoL and psychosocial functioning in patients with chronic fatigue syndrome improve after a six-month multidisciplinary rehabilitation program. The one-year follow-up study without any therapeutic intervention proves that outcome can be maintained. The correlation between the persisting outcome results and the increase of Self Efficacy will be discussed.