

Effectiveness of mindfulness based stress reduction and mindfulness based cognitive therapy in vascular disease

“Mindfulness is a way of learning to relate directly to whatever is happening in your life, a way of taking charge of your life, a way of doing something for yourself that no one else can do for you — consciously and systematically working with your own stress, pain, illness, and the challenges and demands of everyday life.”

Centre for Mindfulness in Medicine

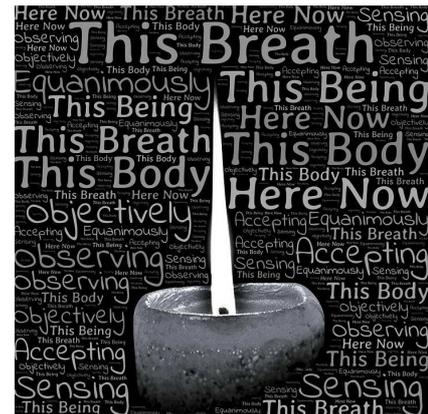
What did we find?

- Mindfulness based therapy for people with, or at risk of, vascular disease (such as diabetes or hypertension) is associated with reductions in both self-reported depression and anxiety.
- Mindfulness therapy for people with, or at risk of, vascular disease is also associated with reductions in perceived stress.
- There is inconsistent evidence for the effect of mindfulness therapy on physical outcomes: some studies finding reductions in blood pressure and improved blood sugar control, while others not.
- The majority of studies were short term and there were concerns about study design and quality.

Why did we do this review?

Vascular disease is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality. Both the disease itself and its associated clinical events, such as heart attack and stroke, are significant and distressing life events. Depression, anxiety, and psychological distress, in turn, are independent risk factors for vascular disease morbidity and mortality .

There is a recognised need to equip patients with vascular disease with skills and coping strategies to help reduce or manage perceived psychological stress. Mindfulness-based ap-



proaches have been advocated as one promising psychosocial approach. Two of the main mindfulness-based approaches are Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT).

The purpose of this systematic review was to establish whether MBSR and MBCT are effective in the management of both depressive and physical symptoms in individuals with vascular disease and those at high risk of vascular disease.

How did we do this review?

The research was a systematic review. This brings together all existing research on a particular question. To find studies that might help us to answer the question we searched the relevant academic literature. In particular, for this review, we looked for randomised controlled trials. Eight trials (7 MBSR and 1 MBCT) were found, involving populations with hypertension, heart disease, diabetes and post-stroke.

