

Title of Intervention: Support and education groups for college students with insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM)

Intervention Strategies: Group Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To improve management of students with diabetes through peer support

Population: College students between the ages of 17 and 31 who have had IDDM for 6 months to 10 years

Setting: College campus; community-based

Partners: Universities, health care professionals

Intervention Description:

- Group Education: Groups met for ninety minutes each week for ten consecutive weeks. Membership was closed after the first meeting in order to foster a climate of trust. At each group session, discussion focused on a diabetes-related topic. The first thirty minutes were devoted to a formal presentation relevant to the college-aged student with IDDM. The remaining hour was an open discussion and sharing of personal concerns of living with diabetes.

Theory: Social Cognitive Theory

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Group facilitators
- Training: Training for group facilitators
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Meeting space
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Formal presentations
- Evaluation: Materials to collect blood samples, questionnaires

Evaluation:

- Design: Quasi-experimental, no control group
- Methods and Measures:
 - Blood samples were collected to measure glycemic control.
 - Participants completed diabetes knowledge and behavior questionnaires.
 - Participants wrote an essay about the question, "How did the group experience affect you?"

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Participants of the group sessions felt more supported.
- Long Term Impact: Participants of the group sessions changed important self-management behaviors. Those who participated in the group showed a statistically significant improvement in glycemic control.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: These results suggest that the peer group approach may be a viable way to improve the metabolic control of young adults with diabetes at a time in their lives when they are learning to manage their illness independently.

Citation(s):

Shalom, R. (1991). "A pilot study of support and education groups for college students with insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus." J Am Coll Health 39(6): 277-9.