

Placebo effect: a Cure in the Mind

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Introduction

Our brain is known to work in mysterious ways, and the placebo effect is a prime example of that. Most of us know a thing or two about it, namely that we can essentially cure ourselves of maladies simply. Believing that our condition will be improved, we will begin to feel better and identifiable symptoms may disappear.

Aim

The aim of our research is to study the placebo methods and to determine the impact of their effect on humans.

Materials and methods

A placebo does not contain an active drug ingredient. A change in a person's symptoms as a result of getting a placebo is called the placebo effect.

It relies on complex neurobiological mechanisms involving neurotransmitters and activation of specific areas of the brain. Many drugs also act through these pathways. Besides, genetic codes of patients who are likely to respond to placebo are being identified. Such basic discoveries have greatly enhanced the credibility of placebo effects.

Results

There are 3 types of the placebo effect: positive, negative and mixed. The positive placebo effect means a great progress after taking placebo, for example, it can help to reduce certain symptoms such as pain, anxiety and trouble sleeping.

The negative placebo effect means directly opposite changes: impairment of health and the emergence of adverse symptoms.

Mixed placebo effect occurs when the same person has both positive and negative developments. The proportion of positive and negative placebo effects may be different, not only between individuals but also in one person at different time.

Placebo is often the only thing that a doctor could offer to relieve suffering, other than his or her attention and support. The act of taking them gives you an improved sense of well-being. However, recent research indicates that placebos may also bring about a physical response.

Though placebo may provide relief, they rarely cure. The therapeutic benefits associated with placebo effects do not alter the pathophysiology of diseases beyond their symptomatic manifestations; they primarily address subjective and self-appraised symptoms.

Conclusion

Placebo effect is relevant in those areas of medicine where psychosomatic component is high. However, placebo effect is not much worse than that of the drugs used for relieving many symptoms: chronic pain, the symptoms of psychiatric disorders, etc. Clinical trials prove that belief is powerful medicine, even if the treatment itself is a sham.