Abstract

Objective:
To systematically review the literature on published randomized controlled trials (RCTs) of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for adult ADHD and to establish the effectiveness of CBT in reducing ADHD symptoms.

Method:
A systematic review of nine RCTs and two subsequent meta-analyses of eight of the studies were conducted.

Results:
Just nine studies were identified, of generally good quality but with some limitations. Four trials (total N = 160) compared CBT with waiting list controls, and three trials (total N = 191) compared CBT with appropriate active control groups. Meta-analyses showed that CBT was superior to waiting list with a moderate to large effect size (standardized mean difference [SMD] = 0.76, 95% confidence interval [CI] [0.21, 1.31], p = .006) and superior to active control groups with a small to moderate effect size (SMD = 0.43, 95% CI [0.14, 0.71], p = .004).

Conclusion:
These results give support to the efficacy of CBT in reducing symptoms of ADHD post-intervention.