

# Cognitive–behaviour therapy for health anxiety in medical patients (CHAMP): a randomised controlled trial with outcomes to 5 years

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## Plain English summary

### The CHAMP RCT

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## Plain English summary

**M**any people worry excessively about their health and suffer greatly as a consequence. They are frequent attenders in primary care and in medical clinics and secondary care. This study tested whether or not a modified form of cognitive-behaviour therapy for health anxiety (CBT-HA) given by supervised and trained therapists, most of whom were initially naive, was more effective than standard care in patients attending five types of medical clinic in five hospitals in England. We followed up these patients for 5 years.

We found that CBT-HA at an average of six sessions was much more effective than standard care in improving health anxiety and also led to greater improvement in anxiety and depressive symptoms. This greater improvement was found over the whole 5-year period. Those attending cardiology clinics had the most benefit. Costs were similar in both groups, mainly because many who took part had other medical illnesses as well as health anxiety. Nurses as therapists were at least as good as psychologists and other health professionals in giving the treatment.

We recommend that further work is needed in research to identify and treat the growing problem of health anxiety in hospitals.



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