

Adjunctive Medication Management and Contingency Management to enhance adherence to acamprostate for alcohol dependence: the ADAM trial RCT

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Plain language summary

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Plain language summary

What is the problem?

Many people who are trying to stop drinking alcohol can find it difficult to remain alcohol free. There is a medication called acamprosate (Campral) that can reduce cravings thereby increasing the likelihood of abstinence. However, some people have trouble taking the right amount of acamprosate tablets needed every day at the right time, preferably at mealtimes. This means the medication is not as effective. We have tested some new ways to help support people taking acamprosate.

What did we do?

We tested three different strategies to find the best way to support people taking acamprosate. We recruited 739 people aged 18 and over who were receiving alcohol treatment to stop drinking and were taking acamprosate. We randomly allocated these people to three groups. The first was Standard Support, the usual support people receive when taking acamprosate. The second group received Standard Support plus Medication Management. This consisted of 12 telephone calls over 6 months with a trained pharmacist to discuss the importance of taking the right amount of the medication, how the medication works and strategies to help people take the medication correctly. The third group received Standard Support, Medication Management and Contingency Management. This involved giving people shopping vouchers for participating with Medication Management calls. The maximum value of vouchers per person was £120.

What did we find out?

People who were in the group receiving Medication Management and Contingency Management took a greater number of acamprosate tablets. We also found that Medication Management plus Contingency Management was more cost-effective; there were greater gains in health with a smaller cost per person compared to Standard Support alone. This shows that there is likely to be a benefit to patients of Medication Management plus Contingency Management for supporting people taking acamprosate.

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