

Hypnosis - An Imaginative World Dentistry

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Abstract

Dental anxiety is a common problem, affecting up to 58% of people. It can range from mild discomfort to severe phobia, which can make it difficult or impossible to get necessary dental care [1]. Anxious, fearful, or uncooperative behavior in children can make it difficult for dentists to provide them with the care they need. This can lead to missed appointments, delayed treatment, and even dental neglect [2]. Hypnosis is a non-pharmaceutical treatment that can be effective in reducing dental anxiety. It works by helping people to relax and focus their attention, which can reduce the perception of pain and anxiety [1].

Keywords: Dental anxiety, Fear, Pain, Behaviour management, Hypnosis, Pediatric dentistry.

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INTRODUCTION

Dental anxiety is a major problem that can have a negative impact on both the patient's oral health and their overall well-being. It can lead to a number of negative consequences, including, postponing or cancelling dental visits, avoiding treatment entirely, having more decayed, missing, and less filled teeth, experiencing more pain during dental procedures, having a lower quality of life [1].

Behavioral control is an essential aspect of the management of children in the dentist's office, which depends on the child's cooperation and, consequently, the quality of the dental treatments undertaken depend, with the main objective of behavioural management being the relief of fear and anxiety. Children are often afraid of the dentist and the dental procedures, and this fear can make it difficult to provide them with the care they need. There are a number of different behavioural management techniques that can be used to help children relax and cooperate during dental visits. There are four main techniques used to control children's behavior in the dental operatory: Tell-show-do, Positive reinforcement, Distraction, Physical restraint [2]. Among the extensive list of therapies available ranging from compelling communication to protective restraining, lying in the

dark is HYPNOSIS, which may help in solving the problem in such cases [3]. The term "hypnosis" is derived from the Ancient Greek word for "sleep" ("hypnos"). Hypnosis is a state of deep relaxation and focus in which the conscious mind is suppressed and the subconscious is released. This allows the hypnoterapist to access the subconscious mind, where fears reside, and help the patient release those fears. Hypnosis has been shown to be an effective treatment for a variety of anxiety disorders, including fear of public speaking, social anxiety, and specific phobias. It is also a valuable tool for pain management and stress reduction. In hypnosis the person's body may become more relaxed, and they may experience a feeling of detachment from their surroundings. However, they are still aware of what is going on and can respond to the hypnotist's suggestions [4].

HISTORY

Franz Mesmer, a German physician in 18th century developed word "mesmerism", his beliefs about the balance of magnetic power in our body, using animal magnetism. But later this theory got rejected as it has no scientific basis. James Braid, a clinician who used to follow Mesmer, coined the word 'hypnosis' which means 'sleep'. However, both hypnosis and sleep can

enhance our external focus. Sigmund Freud is credited with developing the concept of the unconscious mind, which is a significant finding in psychoanalysis. Freud believed that the unconscious mind is a reservoir of repressed thoughts, feelings, and memories that can influence our behavior without our conscious awareness. Freud initially used hypnosis to help his patients access their unconscious minds. However, he found that hypnosis was not always effective and that it could sometimes lead to false memories. The originator of contemporary hypnosis is regarded as Milton Erickson. He was a psychiatrist who developed a new approach to hypnosis that was more respectful of the client's autonomy and less focused on identifying the root cause of their problems. Erickson's approach to hypnosis is known as Ericksonian hypnosis. It is based on the belief that the unconscious mind is a powerful resource that can be used to promote healing and positive change. Erickson used a variety of techniques in his practice, including storytelling, metaphor, and indirect suggestion. Erickson's work on hypnosis has had a profound impact on modern hypnotherapy [5].

PROCESS OF HYPNOTIC INDUCTION

1) INDUCTION - by telling the patient about an imaginative experience. The hypnotist might ask the patient to imagine a place where they feel safe and relaxed, or to imagine a situation in which they are successful. This helps the patient to relax and focus their attention.

2) DEEPNER - The second stage of hypnosis is designed to deepen the patient's relaxation and focus. This is often done using counting down or descending imagery, such as the examples you provided. The goal is to help the patient enter a trance state, which is a state of heightened suggestibility. Once the patient is in a trance state, the hypnotist can begin to make suggestions.

3) SUGGESTION - The third stage of hypnosis is the stage for actual change in experience, behavior, or perception. This is where the hypnotherapist will use imagery and carefully chosen language to make suggestions to the patient. The suggestions can be about anything, but they are usually symptom-focused or exploratory. Symptom-focused suggestions are designed to help the patient resolve a specific symptom, such as anxiety, pain, or insomnia.

4) EMERGENCE - The fourth stage of hypnosis is emergence. This is the stage where the patient comes out of the trance state. The hypnotist may use reverse deepeners to help the patient emerge from the trance state. Reverse deepeners are suggestions that are the opposite of the suggestions that were used to induce the trance state. For example, the hypnotist might suggest to the patient that they are climbing up stairs or counting up. The hypnotist will also give the patient suggestions to help them feel refreshed and alert when they come out of the trance state [7].

HOW HYPNOSIS HELP TO RELIEVE DENTAL ANXIETY AND PHOBIA

Right brain is often overactive in people with anxiety. The right brain is responsible for processing emotions, including fear and anxiety. When the right brain is overactive, it can cause people to perceive threats that are not actually there. This can lead to physical symptoms of anxiety, such as a racing heart, sweating, and difficulty breathing. The left brain is responsible for logical thinking and problem-solving. In people with anxiety, the left brain may be less involved in evaluating threats. This can make it difficult for people to calm down and think rationally when they are feeling anxious. The right/left brain model can be a helpful way for clinicians to explain to patients why they may feel anxious even when they know that there is no real danger. It can also help patients to understand that they can learn to control their anxiety by strengthening the connections between the left and right brains [4].

HYPNOSIS IN PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

It can be very challenging to convince a child to accept dental treatment, especially if they are anxious or afraid. The unfamiliar environment, sounds, smells, and instruments of the dentist's office can be very overwhelming for children, and can trigger anxiety and fear. This can lead to behaviors that indicate discomfort and stress, such as crying, screaming, or trying to run away. The goal of pediatric dentist is to provide children with the oral health care they need, and to do so in a way that is as comfortable and stress-free as possible. Hypnosis can be a helpful tool for managing children's dental anxiety and pain. The dentist can use hypnosis to help the child relax and focus on something else, such as a pleasant memory or image. This can help to reduce the child's anxiety and make it easier for them to tolerate the dental procedure [7]. The two prerequisites for using hypnosis in children are: 1) Establish a good therapeutic relationship - This is important because children need to feel safe and comfortable with the hypnotherapist in order to be able to relax and enter a trance state. 2) Adapt the techniques to the child's age according to the degree of their cognitive development and their preferences. Children of different ages have different cognitive abilities and preferences. Hypnotherapists need to be able to tailor their techniques to the individual child [6].

HYPNOSIS IN BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

The effectiveness of different non-pharmacological interventions can vary depending on the individual patient and the specific procedure. However, these techniques is beneficial for pediatric patients and offer a safe and effective way to manage anxiety, stress, and pain during dental visits. Hypnosis makes it feasible to direct the child's attention, alleviate their discomfort, and change their perceptions of pain. Dissociation and the suggestion that the children focus his thoughts elsewhere may also be used to accomplish these goals. While recommendations are effective with most children, for a select few—those who are able to

comprehend and act upon the ideas—hypnosis may prove to be the sole method. For the majority of children with intellectual disability, this is not applicable [6].

HYPNOSIS USED AS AN ANALGESIA

Hypnosis has been largely overshadowed by pharmaceutical sedation and general anesthetics for pain management, particularly in major surgeries.

Hypnosis for Analgesia:

1) Limited effectiveness: While research shows hypnosis can be effective for pain management in some cases, its efficacy varies greatly between individuals and is generally considered less reliable than pharmaceutical options.

2) Superseded in major surgeries: Due to its limitations, hypnosis is rarely used as the sole method of pain control during major surgeries.

Hypnosis with Local Anesthesia:

Potential benefits: Combining hypnosis with local anesthesia might offer some advantages, such as:

1) Reduced Need for Sedation: Hypnosis could potentially reduce the amount of sedative medication needed, leading to faster recovery and fewer side effects.

2) Improved Patient Experience: Hypnosis can promote relaxation and anxiety reduction, leading to a more positive surgical experience.

3) Faster Discharge: Reduced sedation and improved well-being might allow for earlier discharge from the hospital.

Overall, while the use of hypnosis as the sole method of pain control has diminished, exploring its potential as an adjunct to local anesthesia in specific situations is an interesting avenue for further research. It's important to remember that the decision on the most appropriate pain management approach should be made by a qualified healthcare professional considering the individual patient's needs and the specific procedure. The patient must enter deep hypnosis, which takes time, and be in a setting free from interruptions and distractions in order to use hypnosis for analgesia [8].

LIMITATION

One drawback of hypnosis is that not everyone is capable of being hypnotized. "Suggestibility" is a term used to characterize a person's hypnotic susceptibility. Peretz et al. described suggestibility as an individual's capacity for accepting ideas and assertions without questioning. The assessment of a person's vulnerability is dependent on their social context, emotional stability, and mental and chronological age. Everybody is susceptible to some extent, according to certain research; at least 80% of people are hypnotically capable. Individuals with strong intelligence and motivation are

ideal for hypnosis due to their capacity to concentrate. Exhibitionists are also easily induced. Patients with low IQs who struggle to focus, those at the extremes of age, and scientifically inclined people are more difficult to hypnotize [8].

CONCLUSION

Hypnosis is an easy, painless, inexpensive non pharmacological technique which is still underused. It is an excellent therapeutic tool that can enhance a professional's career and skill if used appropriately and with the right patient selection and training. Dental professionals who are keen to use hypnosis should undergo clinical training for their understanding and applications. Hypnosis is a powerful tool that can be used to help patients in a variety of ways, but it is important to use it correctly and safely [1]. Hypnosis has a wide range of applications in dentistry, from relieving anxiety to providing total analgesia during surgery. This is a unique management alternative for people who struggle with standard anaesthetic and sedative methods. It can be used alone or with sedation. The absence of use of hypnosis in general dentistry may be due to a lack of understanding of the therapy and its applications. Promoting clinical hypnosis by highlighting its benefits and ease of use, examining different types of hypnosis, and offering light hypnosis techniques to relax patients can inspire practitioners to employ it for other purposes [8].

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