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Psychosocial Treatments in Pain Management of Sickle Cell Disease

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The principal symptom of sickle cell disease (SCD) is pain. Many studies have been conducted on pain management strategies for this illness. There is recognition that psychosocial factors influence clinical disease outcomes; therefore, more attention is being provided to behavioral interventions that address psychosocial problems. This review examines the psychosocial interventions that have been researched for children and adults with SCD, the limitations of these studies, and barriers to implementing the treatments. The intervention receiving the most empirical support was cognitive-behavioral therapy. Additional research is needed to define the efficacy and effectiveness of the other psychosocial treatments. Suggestions for future investigations include conducting research that has better methodology, and providing more education for health care providers about psychosocial treatments and the importance of considering cultural factors in health care delivery. In addition, individuals with SCD need to have more information about their illness and better access to psychosocial interventions.

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Keywords

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