WHAT WORKS IN METHAMPHETAMINE TREATMENT

There are effective treatments for methamphetamine dependence. In fact, one study showed that methamphetamine users have the most successful outcomes in treatment. Treatment works! And it doesn’t have to be long term intensive intervention.

**Brief therapy**

Baker et al found that just 2 sessions of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Motivational Interviewing increased abstinence in dependent methamphetamine users and 4 sessions also decreased depression. Drop out during treatment was low at 30%.

Brief CBT and MI is the gold standard treatment

**Mid length therapy**

Smout et al showed that 12 sessions of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, a form of behaviour therapy with mindfulness, reduced drug use. However the median number of sessions attended was 3 and drop out during treatment was 70%.

ACT is a viable alternative to traditional CBT

**Longer therapy**

McKetin et al showed that residential rehabilitation is effective in increasing abstinence among methamphetamine users but relapse after treatment is high at around 80% by 1 year

Some people benefit from long term intensive treatment

Medicines: No medicines are approved to treat methamphetamine dependence. Some are promising and research continues.

Withdrawal (‘detox’): Withdrawal on its own has close to 100% relapse. Withdrawal needs to be followed up by effective treatment.

Sources:

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