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Medical yoga in the workplace setting–perceived stress and work ability–a feasibility study

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Highlights

- Recruiting participating work units through the unit managers was challenging.
- Less than 40% of the work group wanted to participate and adherence to the intervention varied between individuals.
- Care should be taken when planning the intervention in terms of information, availability, site and time of yoga sessions.
- Perceived stress diminished and perceived work ability increased both in the intervention and the control groups during the study.

Abstract

Objective

This study examined the feasibility of using an intervention of Medical Yoga in the workplace and investigated its effects on perceived stress and work ability.

Design and setting

This was a quasi-experimental pilot study comparing a group who received Medical Yoga (intervention group, N = 17), with a group waiting to receive Medical Yoga (control group, N = 15).

Intervention

Medical Yoga in nine weekly sessions led by a certified instructor, as well as an instruction film to be followed at home twice weekly.

Main outcome measures: Feasibility was assessed through recruitment, eligibility, willingness to participate, response to questionnaires and adherence to the intervention plan. Stress was measured with the [Perceived Stress Scale](#), work ability with the Work Ability Index.

Results

Convincing unit managers to let their employees participate in this intervention was difficult. Eligibility was perfect, but only 40% of workers were willing to participate. The subjects adhered to a great extent to the intervention and answered the questionnaires satisfactorily. Reaching target individuals requires careful attention to informing participants.

The intervention showed no significant effects on stress and work ability, though the two measures correlated significantly over time.

Conclusion

Factors limiting feasibility of this workplace intervention were identified. Work place interventions may need to be sanctioned at a higher managerial level. The optimal time, length and availability of the workplace intervention should be explored further. Knowledge from this study could be used as a foundation when planning a larger scale study.



Keywords

Yoga; Workplace; Stress; Work ability

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