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### Comparative Effectiveness Integrated Group Therapy and Group Drug Therapy for Patients with Bipolar Disorder and Substance Abuse Disorder

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Bipolar disorder is a usual, severe and recurring psychiatric disorder. Many of substance abuser has been reported in bipolar patients, but the connection between substance abuse and bipolar disorder has not been well characterized. The abuse of drugs in bipolar patients is a significant public health concern and has been less extensively investigated. Furthermore Failure to recognize and treat this coexistent substance abuse may preclude the proper management of the bipolar disorder. While bipolar disorder and substance use disorder frequently co-occur, there is little information on the efficiency of behavioral treatment for this population. Integrated group therapy concentrations on the relationship between the two disorders, emphasizing similarities in the thoughts and behaviors typically involved in the recovery from each disorder. In this study, integrated group therapy, which addresses the two disorders simultaneously, was compared with group drug counseling, which concentrations on substance use. Thirty Patients with current bipolar disorder (BD) and substance dependence (Diagnosed by the concerned hospital specialist) selected and their spouse interviewed individually with a request to cooperate in the research. Written informed consent was gained after study processes were fully explained. *Inclusion criteria* were: age  $\geq 20$ , current diagnoses of BD and substance abuse disorder, based on the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-V, substance use within 50 days prior to intake; a mood stabilizer abstinence for  $\geq 2$  weeks, prescribed independently by the patient's own physician; ability to attend group therapy sessions and follow-up; and *Exclusion criteria* were: recent psychosis, mania at the intake evaluation, suicide or homicide, concurrent group treatment, and residential treatment restricting substance use. A randomized controlled trial compared 24 weeks of integrated group therapy or group drug counseling with 4 months of post treatment follow-up. 30 patients with bipolar disorder and current substance dependence, treated with mood stabilizers for  $\geq 2$  weeks, were randomly assigned to group drug therapy (N=15) or integrated group therapy (N=15). The outcome measure was the number of days of substance use. The mood outcome was the number of weeks ill with a mood episode. Analyses indicated trends favoring integrated group therapy, with greater decrease in substance use during follow-up and a greater reduction in risk of mood episodes during treatment. Moreover results favored integrated group therapy, with a significantly greater likelihood of attaining total abstinence, a significantly shorter time to the first abstinent month, and a significantly greater likelihood of attaining a well clinical consequence. A new treatment specifically for patients with bipolar disorder and substance abuse disorder is the integrated group therapy. Seems to be a promising approach to decrease substance use in this population. Integrated group therapy can be render successfully by substance abuse disorder psychotherapists, with better overall consequences than those got with group drug psychotherapy.

Keywords: Integrated Group Therapy, Group Drug Therapy, Bipolar Disorder, Substance Abuse Disorder

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