

The Effect of Videoconference-Delivered Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) on Burnout Symptoms in Working Adults

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Introduction

Insomnia is increasingly recognized as both a contributing factor to burnout and a predictor of future disability leave^{1,2}. Despite this, little research has investigated whether treating insomnia can alleviate burnout symptoms.

This study aimed to examine the impact of videoconference-delivered Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) on burnout symptoms in a working adult population.

Methods

Patient sample

Thirty adult workers (mean age = 42.6) experiencing insomnia symptoms.

Protocol

1. Online or in-app screener
2. Call with a sleep care coordinator
3. Online psychotherapy intervention

Intervention

Five to six weekly 30-minute videoconference-delivered CBT-I sessions with a licensed therapist, supported by a digital platform and mobile app.

Outcome measures

Baseline and post-therapy:

- **Insomnia severity** was assessed using the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI).
- **Burnout symptoms** were measured with the Burnout Assessment Tool¹ (BAT).
- Participants completed both measures at **baseline** and **three months post-therapy**.

Analysis

Data were analyzed using one-tailed paired t-tests to assess changes in ISI and BAT scores, and Pearson correlations to examine associations between changes in insomnia and burnout symptoms.

Burnout Assessment Tool

Example questions

- At work, I feel physically exhausted.
- I struggle to find any enthusiasm for my work
- I feel a strong aversion towards my job.
- I'm cynical about what my work means to others.
- At work, I have trouble staying focused.
- I make mistakes in my work because I have my mind on other things.
- At work, I feel unable to control my emotions.
- I do not recognize myself in the way I react emotionally at work.

References

1. Armon G, Shirom A, Shapira I, Melamed S. On the nature of burnout-insomnia relationships: a prospective study of employed adults. *J Psychosom Res.* 2008 Jul;65(1):5-12.
2. Kang S, Waters AJ, Bryan CJ. Association between burnout and insomnia in U.S. Air Force Pararescue personnel: A cross-sectional study. *Mil Psychol.* 2023 Jan-Feb;35(1):1-11. doi: 10.1080/08995605.2022.2058301.
3. Schaufeli WB, Desart S, De Witte H. Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT)—Development, Validity, and Reliability. *Int J Environ Res Public Health.* 2020;17(24):9495

Results

ISI scores significantly decreased from baseline

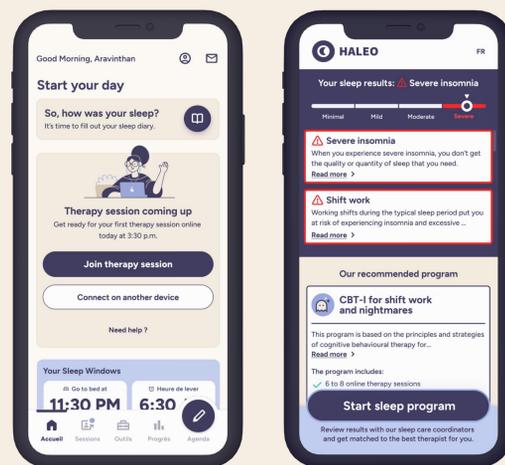
(M = 15.93, SD = 4.36) to post-therapy (M = 7.30, SD = 5.72; $t(29) = 7.68$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.40$).

Similarly, BAT scores were significantly lower post-therapy

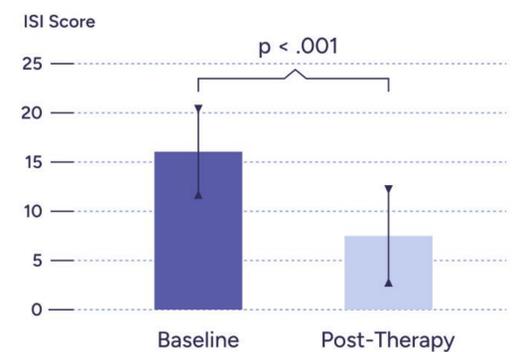
(M = 2.03, SD = 0.54) compared to baseline (M = 2.54, SD = 0.48; $t(29) = 5.57$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.02$).

A significant positive correlation was found between improvements in ISI and BAT scores

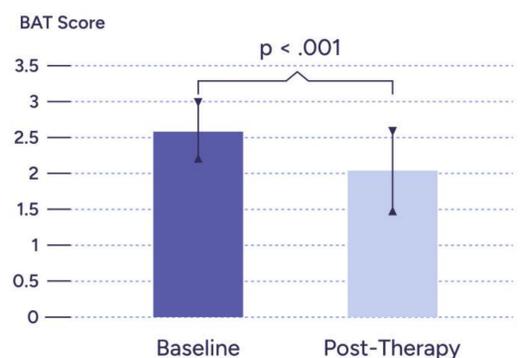
($r = 0.52$, $p = .003$), indicating that reductions in insomnia severity were associated with reductions in burnout symptoms.



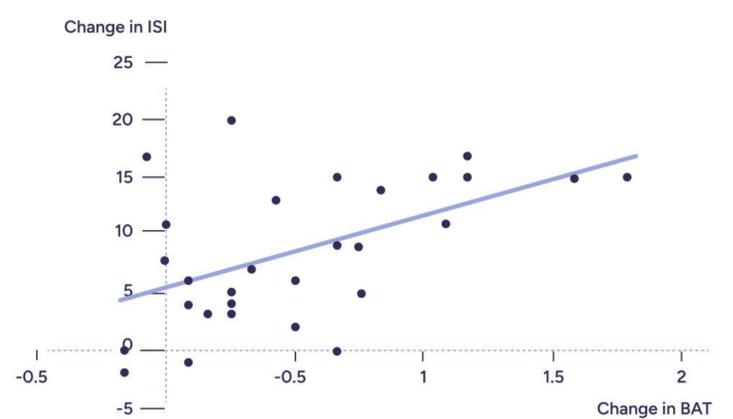
Insomnia symptoms (ISI)



Burnout symptoms (BAT)



Change in ISI and change in BAT



Conclusion

The findings suggest that, beyond its established effectiveness in reducing insomnia symptoms, videoconference-delivered CBT-I may also contribute to significant reductions in burnout symptoms among working adults. The observed correlation between reductions in insomnia and burnout symptoms highlights a potential interaction that warrants further exploration.

The results suggest that telehealth-based CBT-I offers a promising treatment option in workers with insomnia and burnout symptoms.

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