

Poster presentation

The Alzheimer's patients ... do learn!

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Background

Cognitive disorders are of the main deficits in the first stages of dementia of Alzheimer's type (DAT). Memory deficits are obviously as DAT patients delete almost immediately new information and have encode and recall processing impairment. Basing on the new scientific data for neuroplasticity and neurogenesis of the elderly brain we used a memory intervention program in order to help mild DAT patients to improve their mental state.

Method

10 mild DAT patients participated as experimental group in the memory training program. There was also a control group of 10 mild DAT patients matched in terms of age, education, and mental state received no memory training. The two groups were administered the same clinical (DSM-IV and NINCDS-ADRDA) and neuropsychological assessment (MMSE, CAMCOG, BNT, Verbal fluency, RBMT, PPT and Wisconsin) and took as medical treatment inhibitor of cholinesterase for the same period. The intervention program lasted about four months with three hours a week sessions and home exercises for the rest of the weekdays.

Results

The results of the intervention showed statistically significant improvement in all memory and cognitive neuropsychological tests after 6 months of the end of the intervention program ($p < 0.050$).

Discussion

The conclusion is that mild DAT patients can learn memory strategies and new information and that memory training lasted for considerable time and extended to

other cognitive abilities, such as attention, verbal fluency, semantic association.