



Research Week 2020

Pilot Feasibility and Acceptability of MBCT for Perinatal Women With Trauma History

Candice Kennedy, M.S., Kristen Mackiewicz Seghete, Alice Graham

OHSU, Pacific University

Keywords

perinatal depression, mindfulness, cognitive therapy

Abstract

Purpose

Postpartum depression (PPD) can have significant consequences for mothers and infants. Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) during pregnancy is an effective preventative intervention for PPD. However, little is known regarding the efficacy and potential mechanisms of action of MBCT for women with a trauma history. In this pilot trial, we attempted to establish the feasibility and acceptability of conducting an intergenerational translational study of the neurobiological mechanisms of action of MBCT during pregnancy for women with trauma histories.

Method

Pregnant women were recruited to participate in an MBCT group during pregnancy or treatment as usual (TAU). Maternal neuroimaging was completed six weeks postpartum, and infant neuroimaging was completed in the first four weeks following birth. The Maltreatment and Abuse Chronology of Exposure (MACE) and the Client Satisfaction Questionnaire — 8 (CSQ-8) were used to collect data on trauma history and participant satisfaction with their assigned group. Feasibility was calculated using percentage of attendance for greater than four MBCT sessions; acceptability was measured using the CSQ-8. Mean differences between groups on the CSQ-8 were tested using the Mann-Whitney U test.

Results

A total of $N = 12$ women completed the study. Eighty-three percent met clinical cutoff for trauma history on the MACE. Four (80%) participants assigned to MBCT completed at least four groups. Mean CSQ-8 scores for the MBCT group were significantly higher than TAU, $U = 1.500$, $p = .008$. All women and their infants eligible for an imaging session attended.

Conclusions

MBCT and maternal and infant neuroimaging is feasible and acceptable for pregnant women with trauma histories, who are at increased risk of PPD. These are promising results supporting further exploration of MBCT mechanisms at a neurobiological level from larger, randomized samples from this population to provide robust evidence to support this intervention.