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The Impact of Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT® LOUD) on self-perception in individuals with Parkinson disease

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Keywords

Parkinson's, dysarthria, communication, self-perception, voice therapy

Abstract

Background

Individuals with Parkinson Disease (PD) often present with hypokinetic dysarthria which can impact intelligibility, ability to communicate with friends and family, and participation in socialization. Research has shown that PD may also impact how patients perceive themselves as communicators with specific negative impact on their sense of control, confidence, getting their message across, sense of adequacy, and independence. These changes in communication can lead to withdrawal and social isolation. Voice and speech deficits are frequently treated with Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT), an intensive 4-week program of voice therapy, which is regarded as the most well-researched, efficacious treatment for these symptoms. Although numerous studies have been published reporting acoustic and perceptual findings, none have assessed the impact of treatment on how patients perceive themselves. This is the first study to address changes in self-perception after LSVT in patients with PD.

Methods

Twenty-two individuals with idiopathic PD completed a self-perception questionnaire before and immediately after completing LSVT.

Results

Results indicated that there were significant positive improvements for seven of the twenty-two items including feeling confident, patient, withdrawn, equal, clear, getting their message across easily, and being talkative. Interestingly, three of these items were specific to communication but four of them were not. There were no items that showed a worsening of any personality traits evaluated.

Conclusions

The results of our study indicate that participation in an intensive voice therapy program positively impacts features of how patients with PD perceive themselves not only as communicators but also more generally and promote more positive self-appraisals. These findings complement our previous findings of improved communicative effectiveness and communicative participation and suggest that LSVT may promote positive self-perception in pts with PD.