

**THE EFFECT OF A GROUP COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION ON
DIETARY CHOICES OF A PHASE IV CARDIAC REHABILITATION PROGRAM**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of group-mediated cognitive behavioral interventions (GMCB) in cardiac rehabilitation on modifying behavior and diet in cardiac patients. Twenty-two subjects, aged 45-85 years, who were either at risk or had documented evidence of cardiovascular disease, participated in the study. The subjects were randomly divided into two groups: the treatment group (N=11; mean 64.2 yrs) and control group (N=11; mean 64 yrs), with both participating in the aerobic and strength training portion of the phase IV cardiac rehabilitation program. In addition, the treatment group attended weekly GMCB intervention sessions for 12-weeks, with active learning principles focusing on behavior modification and changing attitudes towards health. Over a 3-month period, each group completed a MEDFICTS (MF) food frequency questionnaire, 3-day dietary recall, and MedGem (MG) resting energy expenditure (REE) testing. The treatment group had significantly higher fat percent of total kilocalories, and cholesterol intake at baseline in comparison to the control group. There were no significant differences between groups for post-study data ($p < .05$). For the treatment group, significant correlations existed between MF values and weight, and both fat and saturated fat with daily attendance ($p < .05$). A significant correlation was also found in both groups in relation to the MG REE and predicted REE ($p < .05$). Therefore, weekly cognitive-behavioral intervention sessions positively influenced nutritional choices and dietary behaviors of cardiac rehabilitation participants.