Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

08 Nov 2026

Effectiveness comparison of online relationship enhancement couple therapy program versus systematic desensitization on sexual relationship anxiety in women undergoing infertility treatment with timed intercourse

Protocol summary

Study aim

Effectiveness comparison of online relationship enhancement couple therapy versus systematic desensitization on sexual relationship anxiety in infertility

Design

This study is a quasi-experimental study with a parallel clinical trial that has two groups of 34 people, relationship enhancement couple therapy program and systematic desensitization. In order to prevent the decline in the quality of online education, Each group of 34 people is divided into 2 groups of 17 people. 68 women who have sexual anxiety according to the questionnaire are given a number from 1 to 68. Using random allocation1 software, individuals are randomly assigned to two groups of relationship therapy and regular desensitization based on the software output table.

Settings and conduct

Shahrekord infertility treatment Invitation to study, sample selection, random assignment, and psychological intervention is done by the second author under the supervision of a supervisor and a couple therapy counselor.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: Iranian nationality; Persian fluency; primary infertility; having sexual anxiety based on the Sexual Anxiety Scale; Internet literacy and smartphone; having shared bed with husband. Exclusion criteria: Pregnancy; having neurological diseases and taking psychiatric drugs; not having internet; Dispute in recent month; psycho counseling during last 6 months; unpleasant events like relevant death.

Intervention groups

Group 1 receives online relationship enhancement couple therapy program and group 2 receives online systematic desensitization in 8 sessions of 60 minutes. The content of the sessions in Skyroom is presented in groups. The counselor, the counseling method and the counseling time are the same for both groups.

Main outcome variables

Change in the mean scores of sexual anxiety measured by the questionnaire "Measurement of sexual anxiety" .

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20211127053188N1**
Registration date: **2021-12-25, 1400/10/04**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2021-12-25, 1400/10/04**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2021-12-25, 1400/10/04

Registrant information

Name

Maryam Afzal dehkordi

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 38 3333 0444

Email address

afzal-m@skums.ac.ir

Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2022-01-21, 1400/11/01

Expected recruitment end date

2022-03-21, 1401/01/01

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title

Effectiveness comparison of online relationship enhancement couple therapy program versus systematic desensitization on sexual relationship anxiety in women undergoing infertility treatment with timed intercourse

Public title

Effectiveness comparison of relationship enhancement couple therapy versus systematic desensitization on sexual anxiety in infertility

Purpose

Education/Guidance

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:

Having a primary infertility record in Hazrat Zahra Infertility Center in Shahrekord Having sexual anxiety based on a sexual anxiety test questionnaire Internet literacy and smartphone Having a bed with his wife Willingness to participate in this study Iranian nationality Fluency in Persian

Exclusion criteria:

Pregnancy Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS) Having neurological diseases and taking psychiatric drugs based on infertility records Tragic events such as the death of loved ones in the last two months Family quarrel in a recent month Living in a place without internet access Participate in psychological counseling sessions or similar studies over the past 6 months

Age

No age limit

Gender

Female

Phase

N/A

Groups that have been masked

No information

Sample size

Target sample size: **68**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)

Randomized

Randomization description

A total of 68 women under treatment with sexual anxiety are randomly assigned a number from 1 to 68. Using random allocation1 software, individuals are randomly assigned to two groups of Relationship Improvement Couple Therapy (RECT) and Regular Desensitization (SD) based on the software output table. Each group of 34 people is then randomly divided into two subgroups of 17 people. Blindness is not possible due to women's awareness of the type of intervention.

Blinding (investigator's opinion)

Not blinded

Blinding description

Placebo

Not used

Assignment

Parallel

Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee

Ethics Committee of Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences

Street address

4th floor, corner of the alley, No. 40, Alley 16, varzesh Street, shahrekord

City

Shahrekord

Province

Chahar-Mahal-va-Bakhtiari

Postal code

8815846679

Approval date

2021-11-17, 1400/08/26

Ethics committee reference number

IR.SSU.REC.1400.160

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied

Sexual anxiety counseling

ICD-10 code

Z70

ICD-10 code description

Counselling related to sexual attitude, behaviour and orientation

Primary outcomes

1

Description

Measuring the mean scores of sexual anxiety in women undergoing infertility treatment

Timepoint

At baseline, when the intervention was completed at week 8 and at follow-up at study week 12 at the two groups

Method of measurement

Sexual Anxiety Scale (Davis et al.)

Secondary outcomes

1

Description
Spouse satisfaction score of counseling method in two groups
Timepoint
At the end of the intervention at week 8 and at the end of the study at week 12
Method of measurement
Satisfaction visual Scale with one question, score between 1-10

2

Description
Pregnancy frequency
Timepoint
Fallow up week 12
Method of measurement
Pregnancy diagnosis test

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group 1 receives an online relationship enhancement couple therapy program. Intervention sessions include 8 sessions of 60 minutes. The content of online sessions in the form of text, graphics, videos, clips, group chat and questions and answers in Skyroom is presented in groups. Homework and its evaluation by the second author is done under the supervision of the first and third authors in all sessions through WhatsApp. In case of absence of women up to two sessions, a summary of the content of these two sessions will be provided to absentees. Free weekly internet package is provided to women.
Category
Behavior

2

Description
Intervention group 2 receives an online systematic desensitization program. Intervention sessions include 8 sessions of 60 minutes. The content of online sessions in the form of text, graphics, videos, clips, group chat and questions and answers in Skyroom is presented in groups. Homework and its evaluation by the second author is done under the supervision of the first and third authors in all sessions through WhatsApp. In case of absence of women up to two sessions, a summary of the content of these two sessions will be provided to absentees. Free weekly internet package is provided to women.
Category
Behavior

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Infertility treatment center of Hazrat Zahra Shahrekord
Full name of responsible person
Maryam Afzal Dehkordi
Street address
4th floor, No. 40, Alley 16, varzash Street
City
Shahrekord
Province
Chahar-Mahal-va-Bakhtiari
Postal code
8815846679
Phone
+98 38 3333 0444
Email
afzal.midwife@gmail.com

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Yazd University of Medical Sciences
Full name of responsible person
Dr. Amir Hoshang Mehrparvar
Street address
Central Organization of Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences and Health Services Yazd, Shahid Dr. Bahonar Square, Yazd.
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Province
Yazd
Postal code
۸۹۱۶۹۷۸۴۷۷
Phone
+98 35 3726 3733
Fax
+98 35 3726 3732
Email
ah.mehrparvar@gmail.com
Grant name
Grant code / Reference number
Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
Yes
Title of funding source
Yazd University of Medical Sciences
Proportion provided by this source
100
Public or private sector
Public
Domestic or foreign origin
Domestic
Category of foreign source of funding
empty
Country of origin
Type of organization providing the funding

Academic

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity
Yazd University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person
Maryam Afzal Dehkordi

Position
Student

Latest degree
Bachelor

Other areas of specialty/work
Midwifery

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Person responsible for scientific inquiries

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Full name of responsible person
Maryam Afzal dehkordi

Position
Student

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Person responsible for updating data

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Position
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Latest degree
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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Study Protocol
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Informed Consent Form
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Analytic Code
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Data Dictionary
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available