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## Comparison of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Pharmacologic Intervention in Alcohol Use Disorder Treatment

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## **Abstract**

### **Background**

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a condition that can result in chronic health conditions that negatively impact a person's life. Methods to treat AUD involve cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and pharmacologic intervention, including disulfiram (DIS), naltrexone (NTX), and acamprosate (ACA).

### **Objectives**

The purpose of this review is to determine the efficacy of CBT compared to pharmacologic intervention within one year of treatment in adult patients who have been diagnosed with AUD.

### **Methods**

A reference search was conducted using various databases to locate literature. Combined keywords and Boolean operators were utilized to reveal desired articles. A total of 10 studies were analyzed for data relating to the previously specified treatments of AUD.

### **Results**

The 11 articles showed that all pharmacologic interventions alone and combination therapy saw increased days abstinent. CBT alone did not provide significant data in improving AUD. DIS increased abstinence and days till drinking and decreased the number of heavy drinking days and weekly alcohol consumption.

### **Discussion**

Combination therapy was found to be more efficacious in treating AUD than either treatment alone. Pharmacologic intervention alone was found to be more of a short-term treatment with best results observed in DIS groups which were more effective at decreasing alcohol related measures compared to CBT, NTX, or ACA alone. CBT alone was not significantly effective.

**Conclusions**

CBT is an efficacious supplement to pharmacologic intervention in combination therapy and can help with long-term control of alcohol use and shows promising results for future research in the treatment of AUD.

*Keywords:* alcohol use disorder, alcohol dependence, cognitive behavioral therapy, pharmacologic intervention, health outcomes, disulfiram, acamprosate, and naltrexone