The Therapeutic Effects of Nature, Urban, or Standard Hospital Decorations on a Hospitalized Patient

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The Therapeutic Effects of Nature, Urban, or Standard Hospital Decorations on a Hospitalized Patient

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PATIENT CARE ISSUE

• 36,564,886 admissions to all U.S. hospitals registered with AHA in 2011.
• Average length of stay during a hospital admission is 4.8 days.
• Pain, stress level, healing time, and mood have been identified as significant factors in patients’ overall outcomes. Altering these factors using nature as a non-pharmacological, therapeutic source may improve patient outcomes.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE QUESTION

Question: What is the difference in the therapeutic effects of nature, urban, or standard hospital decorations on hospitalized patients pain level, stress level, healing time, and mood?

P - Hospitalized patients
I - Hospital environment
C - Standard vs. urban vs. nature setting
O - Stress, pain level, healing time, and mood

RESULTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Date of Search</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>Articles Used in Review</th>
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<td>OneSearch</td>
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<tr>
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<td>09/08-14/2013</td>
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<td>Ebsco</td>
<td>09/08-14/2013</td>
<td>Scenery, Hospitals Gardens, Hospital Landscape</td>
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</table>

SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE

• Nature reduces stress more than urban or standard hospital decorations
• Supported in all eight studies evaluated1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
• Most researched therapeutic effect of nature
• Preliminary studies show a weak, negative correlation between the level of stress and the amount of natural aspects that more studies may be able to further verify.1
• Nature decreases pain level more than urban or standard hospital decorations
• Supported in all seven studies evaluated1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10
• Different types of nature can have statistically significant differences in the amount of pain reduction1
• Nature decreases healing time more than urban or standard hospital decorations
• Supported in the two studies evaluated5, 12
• Least researched therapeutic effect of nature
• Shown to reduce healing time by almost a full day12
• Nature increases positive mood more than urban or standard hospital decorations
• Supported in three of the four studies evaluated8, 10, 11, 12
• Positive mood has been shown to alter the outcome of diseases and surgeries8

METHODS

• Databases: Pub Med, Ebsco, Medline, and OneSearch
• Key words: Nature, nature in hospitals, gardens, hospital gardens, gardens in hospitals, scenery, hospital scenery, plants, and plants in hospitals
• Inclusion criteria: Articles published between 2008 and 2013, focused on the therapeutic effects of nature on pain, stress, healing time, and mood.

LIMITATIONS

• There is limited data on healing time and mood in relation to nature.
• The landmark study, which is the most in depth study, was done by Ulrich in 1984 and some data may not be as relevant today due to significant hospital changes in decoration and atmosphere.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

Nature should begin to be implemented in the hospital due to its therapeutic effects on pain and stress.
Further research should be conducted to gather more evidence on nature’s effects on healing time and mood.
More research should also be done on which populations respond more positively or negatively to the therapeutic effects of nature, which type of nature therapy is most effective, and what types of nature are the most effective and practical in the hospital setting.