



Enhancing Psychotherapy with Narrow Band Green Light: A Novel Approach

Dehua Chen *

Department of Anesthesia, Hainan Medical University, Haikou, China

DESCRIPTION

Psychotherapy is a widely used and effective treatment for various mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psychotherapy involves talking with a trained therapist who can help the client understand and cope with their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that cause them distress. Psychotherapy can be delivered in different formats, such as individual, group, or online therapy, and can use different approaches, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, or psychodynamic therapy.

However, psychotherapy may not work for everyone, and some people may not benefit from it or drop out prematurely. Therefore, there is a need to find ways to enhance the effectiveness and acceptability of psychotherapy for different populations and conditions. One possible way to do so is to use Narrow Band Green Light (NbGL) as an adjunct to psychotherapy. NbGL is a type of light that has a wavelength of $520 \text{ nm} \pm 10 \text{ nm}$ (peak \pm range) and an intensity of $10 \text{ nm} \pm 5 \text{ nm}$. NbGL has been shown to have beneficial effects on various aspects of health and well-being, such as reducing pain, improving mood, enhancing cognitive performance, and regulating circadian rhythms. NbGL may also have specific effects on mental disorders, such as reducing anxiety and depression.

One of the mental disorders that may benefit from nbGL is Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), which is characterized by excessive and persistent worry about various aspects of life, such as health, work, family, or social situations. People with GAD may experience symptoms such as nervousness, restlessness, irritability, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, insomnia, muscle tension, and somatic complaints. GAD can impair the functioning and quality of life of the affected individuals and increase the risk of developing other mental or physical disorders. Psychotherapy is one of the recommended treatments for GAD, especially Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), which

involves identifying and challenging the negative thoughts and beliefs that underlie the worry and fear. CBT also helps the client develop coping skills and strategies to manage their anxiety and reduce their avoidance of feared situations. However, CBT may not be suitable or accessible for everyone with GAD, and some people may not respond to it or adhere to it. NbGL may enhance the effects of psychotherapy for GAD by influencing various mechanisms that are involved in anxiety regulation.

- Reduce the physiological arousal and stress responses that are associated with anxiety by modulating the activity of the autonomic nervous system and the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis.
- Increase the production and release of neurotransmitters and hormones that are involved in mood regulation, such as serotonin, dopamine, melatonin, and oxytocin.
- Stimulate the activity of brain regions that are involved in emotional processing and regulation, such as the amygdala, the prefrontal cortex, and the anterior cingulate cortex.
- Enhance the learning and memory processes that are involved in psychotherapy, such as extinction learning, consolidation, retrieval, and reconsolidation.

Recent studies provided preliminary evidence for the potential benefit of conducting psychotherapy sessions for patients suffering from GAD under nbGL conditions. The study included 13 patients diagnosed with moderate-to-severe GAD who received 45-minute psychotherapy sessions under either White Light (WL) or nbGL. The study used the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory Questionnaire (Y-1) to compare anxiety level before and after each session. The results showed that psychotherapy sessions conducted under nbGL increased positive feelings and decreased negative feelings significantly more than psychotherapy sessions conducted under WL. The study concluded that nbGL may be a useful add-on to psychotherapy for GAD by enhancing its effectiveness.

Correspondence to: Dehua Chen, Department of Anesthesia, Hainan Medical University, Haikou, China, E-mail: chenhu90@edu.cn

Received: 03-Apr-2023, Manuscript No. JOP-23-21153; **Editor assigned:** 06-Apr-2023, PreQC No. JOP-23-21153 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 20-Apr-2023, QC No JOP-23-21153; **Revised:** 27-Apr-2023, Manuscript No. JOP-23-21153 (R); **Published:** 04-May-2023. DOI: 10.35248/2378-5756.23.26.586

Citation: Chen D (2023) Enhancing Psychotherapy with Narrow Band Green Light: A Novel Approach. J Psychiatry. 26:586.

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