



Randomized Controlled Study of the Attempted Suicide Short Intervention Program

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The Attempted Suicide Short Intervention Program (ASSIP) is a brief, patient-centered therapy that aims to reduce suicidal behavior among patients who recently attempted suicide.

The participants were 120 patients admitted to the emergency unit of a hospital in Switzerland. Researchers randomly assigned participants to receive either (1) a structured suicide risk assessment and treatment as usual or (2) a structured suicide risk assessment and treatment as usual combined with ASSIP. The ASSIP treatment included three to four 60- to 90-minute weekly therapy sessions, along with regular, personalized follow-up letters from a clinician for 24 months. At the initial session and every six months for 24 months, patients completed questionnaires about sociodemographic characteristics, perceived quality of the relationship with their therapist, depressive symptoms, and suicidal ideation.

The ASSIP group showed a significant increase in therapeutic alliance with their clinician over time. Compared to patients in the control group, ASSIP patients had an 18.4% lower rate of repeat suicide attempts at 24 months. The ASSIP group also spent less time in the hospital during the 24-month follow-up period compared to the control group.

ASSIP is a low-cost, easy-to-administer addition to clinical treatment that may be effective in reducing suicidal behavior. Future research should explore the program's ability to reduce suicidal behavior in other clinical settings.

Gysin-Maillart, A., Schwab, S., Soravia, L., Megert, M., & Michel, K. (2016). A novel brief therapy for patients who attempt suicide: A 24-months follow-up randomized controlled study of the Attempted Suicide Short Intervention Program (ASSIP). *PLoS Med*, 13(3). Advance online publication. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001968

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