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NEURAL CORRELATES OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY IN PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is an important treatment in conjunction with psychopharmacotherapy in schizophrenia. However, there is only very little research on the effects of such interventions on brain function.

Recent studies have suggested that jumping to conclusions and a specific attributional bias is a predominant cognitive style in patients which might lead to the development of delusions. In this multi-centre fMRI trial, we investigated the effect of nine months of CBT on neural correlates of “jumping to conclusions” and the “attributional style” in patients with psychosis. Eighty patients and 80 control subjects were recruited in six centres and measured with 3-Tesla functional magnetic imaging (fMRI) before and after CBT.

It could be shown that CBT ameliorates differences in brain activations between patients and controls after nine months.

These results support the feasibility of fMRI multicenter trials and sheds further light into the mechanisms relating psychotherapy to brain function in Schizophrenia.