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**Title:** Impact of a pulmonary rehabilitation program on psychopathology of patients diagnosed with COPD

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**Body:** Introduction: Psychological comorbidities such as anxiety and depression are common in COPD. Recent studies suggest a decrease in both anxiety and depression in patients with COPD who attended a pulmonary rehabilitation program (RP). However there is insufficient literature on changes in general psychopathology after RP. Aims and Objectives: To examine the changes in general psychopathology of patients with COPD after participating in a rehabilitation program. Methods: The participants were patients (80 men and 21 women) with pure COPD who attended a three month RP. The patients' psychopathology was assessed, by the start and by the end of the PR, using the Symptom Checklist-90-R (SCL-90-R), which is a self-report questionnaire widely used in both normal and distressed populations. In order to determine COPD severity a spirometric evaluation before and after bronchodilation was performed. Results: Means of age and of FEV1 % of predicted were  $64.15 \pm 8.13$  and  $43.51 \pm 21.53$ , respectively. Statistically significant changes (Paired t test) were observed at the end of the RP on the following scales: somatisation (0.70 VS 0.45,  $p < 0.01$ ), obsessive-compulsive (0.75 VS 0.48,  $p < 0.01$ ), interpersonal sensitivity (0.44 VS 0.35,  $p < 0.05$ ), depression (0.81 VS 0.48,  $p < 0.01$ ), anxiety (0.63 VS 0.35,  $p < 0.01$ ), hostility (0.53 VS 0.31,  $p < 0.01$ ), phobic anxiety (0.33 VS 0.17,  $p < 0.01$ ), paranoid ideation (0.43 VS 0.33,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, there was no statistical difference regarding the psychoticism scale (0.15 VS 0.13,  $p > 0.05$ ). Conclusions: A pulmonary rehabilitation program may improve psychopathological symptoms, particularly those of the neurotic spectrum, of COPD patients.