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**LALITA MEEPHOL: A STUDY OF RELAXATION TRAINING
ON STRESS RESPONSE IN CHRONIC HEMODIALYSIS PATIENTS.**

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This study was a quasi-experimental research on the application of relaxation training on stress response in chronic hemodialysis patients. The subjects of the study were chronic hemodialysis patients who received hemodialysis at the Hemodialysis Unit, The Kidney Foundation of Thailand at The Priests's Hospital. The sixty-eight patients were chosen by purposive selection according to inclusion criteria. They were divided into an experimental group and a control group, each with 34 subjects. The control group received routine nursing care whereas the experimental group participated in relaxation training. The relaxation technique was followed by the Benson's Respiratory One Method, modified by Guzzetta and lasting 20 minutes each session. The experimental group was taught the relaxation training one time by the researcher and then they practiced twice a day for six weeks, in addition to practicing this technique during their dialysis session at the hemodialysis unit twice a week. The instruments for data collection consisted of demographic data form, and the stress level questionnaire. The subjects of both groups were asked to complete all questionnaires at the beginning as a pre-test and then at the end of each week for 6 weeks of the study as post-test. The data was analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, paired t-test and ANCOVA. The threshold of statistical significance was at 0.05.

The results of this study revealed that after participating in the relaxation training: 1) the subjects in the experimental group had lower level of stress than they did before, 2) the subjects in the control group had lower level of stress than they did before and, 3) the subjects in the experimental group had lower level of stress than those in the control group at the beginning 4 weeks after the intervention.

These results suggest that nurses should realize the benefits of the relaxation training and apply it to reduce stress and promote the effectiveness of a coping method for chronic hemodialysis patients. The efficacy of the relaxation training in reducing stress will be more obvious when it is applied to patients with a high level of stress. Nurses should search for further knowledge and skills of other relaxation techniques to obtain the maximum benefits of the relaxation response.