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The multi-site trial examined the efficacy of four outpatient-based psychosocial treatments for cocaine dependence consisting of group drug counseling (GDC) and GDC in combination with individual drug counseling (IDC), cognitive therapy (CT), or supportive-expressive therapy (SE).

Patients attended GDC weekly and individual therapy sessions for IDC, CT, or SE twice per week. At the end of screening and after six months of treatment, patients completed the Risk Assessment Battery, a standardized questionnaire that measures behaviors associated with HIV risk, such as drug use and high-risk sexual behaviors.

Prior to treatment, the average patient had used cocaine for 7 years and reported 10 days of cocaine use in the previous month. Crack smoking was the most common form of use. Seventy-nine percent of patients smoked crack, 19 percent snorted cocaine, and 2 percent injected the drug. HIV was mainly associated with high-risk sexual behaviors.

At the 6-month follow-up, cocaine use had decreased to an average of once per month. Patients receiving a combination of IDC and GDC showed the best improvements in reducing cocaine use compared to patients receiving CT and SE. Overall, the decrease in cocaine use was associated with a 40 percent reduction in HIV risk across all treatment, gender, and ethnic groups, mainly due to fewer sexual partners and less unprotected sex. These findings indicate that treatment for cocaine addiction, including HIV-risk-reduction counseling, may be an effective strategy for preventing HIV infection.

Dr. George E. Woody and colleagues from the University of Pennsylvania and the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Philadelphia published the study in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes.

SOURCE: NIDA Press Release.

CONFERENCE CALENDAR CORNER

JULY

July 7-11, 2003 – Newport, Rhode Island 207-621-2549
New England School of Treatment for Opioid Dependence
Addiction Technology Transfer Center of New England
<http://www.neias.org>

July 13-16, 2003 – Washington, DC 240-645-1145
2003 Summer Institute
Central East Addiction Technology Transfer Center
<http://www.ceattc.org>

July 21-25, 2003 – Highland Heights, NY 502-564-3487
Kentucky School of Alcohol and Other Drug Studies
Central East Addiction Technology Transfer Center
<http://www.ceattc.org>

July 21-25, 2003 – Williamsburg, Virginia 804-828-9910
Virginia Summer Institute for Addiction Studies
Mid-Atlantic Addiction Technology Transfer Center
<http://www.mid-attc.org>

July 23-25, 2003 – Sedona, Arizona 310-312-0500
Substance Abuse Summer Institute
Pacific Southwest Addiction Technology Transfer Center
<http://www.psattc.org>

July 27-August 1, 2003 – Greenville, SC 803-896-5561
South Carolina School of Alcohol and Other Drug Studies
Southeast Addiction Technology Transfer Center

July 28-30, 2003 – Seattle, Washington 877-301-4557
Washington State Treatment Institute
Northwest Frontier Addiction Technology Transfer Center
<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/dasa>