

Can Meditation Reduce Pain?

by G. Bossik on December 14th, 2011 at 7:00 am



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A new study on the human brain shows that meditation can reduce pain. ¹

The authors measured pain intensity and pain regulation in fifteen volunteers by using a pain rating scale and an MRI, a machine that uses a magnetic field and radio waves to capture x-ray like images.

Two MRI sessions were conducted — one before meditation training and one afterwards.

In the second session, the male and female volunteers experienced less pain after practicing mindfulness meditation, a technique that involves letting random thoughts go and focusing on breathing sensations, according to the authors of the study.

When testing this mind-body technique, scientists applied a heat probe to each volunteer's right leg. They found that the volunteers who meditated had a 40% reduction in pain intensity from the heat and showed different brain activity in the MRI images.

"Meditating, after training, activated brain regions related to the self-regulation of pain," say the scientists.

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Sources:

1. F. Zeidan et al, "Brain Mechanisms Supporting Modulation of Pain by Mindfulness Meditation," The Journal of Neuroscience.

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