

# Tackling a pain in the chest

Power of the mind

BY AJIT LUDHER



**A NON-CARDIAC** chest pain is pain in the chest that is not caused by the heart. It is often caused by the organs near the heart, such as the esophagus.

Symptoms include an ache in the centre of the chest that does not move to the arm, shoulder, or neck areas.

Treatment of the condition will include medication and changes in the diet.

However, treatment is often unsuccessful in the long term and the pain comes back.

Persistent non-cardiac chest pain will have negative effects on the sufferer and this often leads to a weakened psychological state.

A study was performed in 2006 to see whether non-cardiac chest pain could be improved with the help of hypnotherapy.

The study consisted of 28 participants who had been suffering from non-cardiac chest pain but have a normal functioning heart.

It was also determined that acid reflux was not the

cause in any of the 28 patients.

These participants were studied for four weeks and questionnaires were given to them to fill out.

After this four-week period, the participants were randomly put into two groups.

One group received 15 sessions of hypnotherapy and the other group received supportive therapy and a placebo pill for 17 weeks.

The main factor that the researchers were trying to test was to see whether the chest pain has diminished after this intervention.

Other factors they were looking into included quality of life, severity of pain, frequency of pain, anxiety, depression, and use of medication.

The study found that 80% of patients who underwent the hypnotherapy saw an improvement in pain

reduction, compared to 23% of the control group who saw similar improvement in pain reduction.

More specifically, the participants realised they suffer less intense pain though neither group saw an improvement in the frequency of pain.

In addition, the participants in the hypnotherapy group reported a greater sense of well-being.

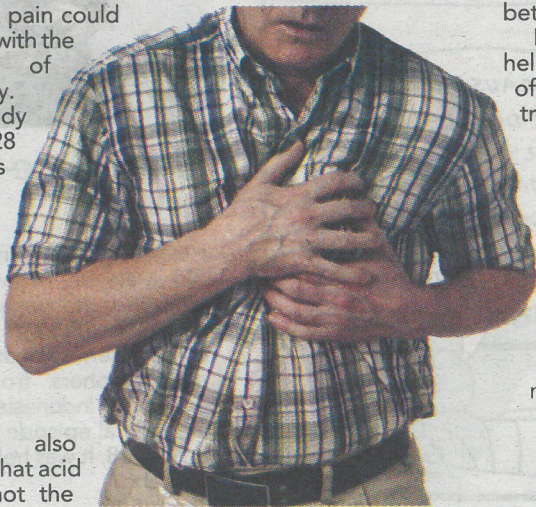
The patients in the experimental group also saw a reduction in the amount of medication needed.

This study supports evidence that hypnotherapy plays a major role in helping people manage their pain.

The implications of this study are great.

The use of hypnotherapy has been found to help people who once suffered from non-cardiac chest pain to learn to control their pain and, in the process, lead a better quality of life.

Hypnotherapy has also helped reduce the amount of medication needed to treat the chest pain.



**Ajit Ludher** is a specialist in advanced professional hypnotherapy, a counselling psychotherapist for trauma/crisis, human resources trainer & motivator and a cognitive behavioural therapist. Readers can reach him at [lifestyle.ajitludher@thesunday.com](mailto:lifestyle.ajitludher@thesunday.com).