

The effect of reflexology on cardiovascular diseases

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Introduction: Cardiovascular diseases patients deal with different challenges in physical, psychological and social dimensions of their life. Using complementary and alternative therapies might be effective in these patients in the acute and chronic phase of the disease. This study aimed to determine the effect of complementary and alternative therapies named reflexology on cardiovascular diseases.

Methods: The present study was performed as a systematic review on the effect of reflexology in cardiovascular patients by searching on Elsevier, and Springer publishing companies, Cochrane network, and PubMed search engine. Search was conducted using keywords such as cardiovascular diseases, reflexology, heart diseases, anxiety and sleep.

Results: This review indicated that reflexology regulated physiological indices such as systolic and diastolic blood pressure, heart rate, respiration, and temperature in patients undergoing angiography, angioplasty, and coronary artery bypass graft and had hypertension and heart failure diseases. On the other hand, limited number of studies reported that this intervention was not effective in physiological indices in cardiovascular disease patients. Moreover, the effect of reflexology on reducing anxiety, pain, and fatigue, and improving sleep were also reported in cardiovascular disease patients.

Conclusion: Considering the effectiveness of reflexology in cardiovascular patients in most studies, in order to achieve evidence-based practice and generalizability of findings, further studies are recommended in cardiovascular patients.

Keywords: Anxiety, Cardiovascular diseases, Reflexology, Sleep, physiological parameters

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