

Harnessing the power of mindset to improve healthcare outcomes

Kari Leibowitz





What do you think when you think of winter?



Winter is dreadful



- "I hate the winter"
- "You can't do fun things in winter"
- "Winter will be cold and boring"
- "The cold is terrible"
- "My face is freezing"
- "I'm just going to stay inside"



Winter is delightful



"Winter is great!"

"There's so much to do in winter"

"Winter will be cozy and fun"

"The cold air is so fresh and crisp"
"I love the way the snow glitters"
"I'm going to get cozy with a book"





Mindsets

- Thoughts
- Beliefs
- Expectations
- Organize
- Direct
- Activate



Mindsets are selective.



Mindset – Winter is dreadful

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- Beliefs
- Organize
- Direct
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Mindset – Winter is delightful

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 - "I'm going to get cozy with a book"



Stanford MIND&BODY LAB



Dr. Alia Crum



"Work is work"



"Work is exercise"

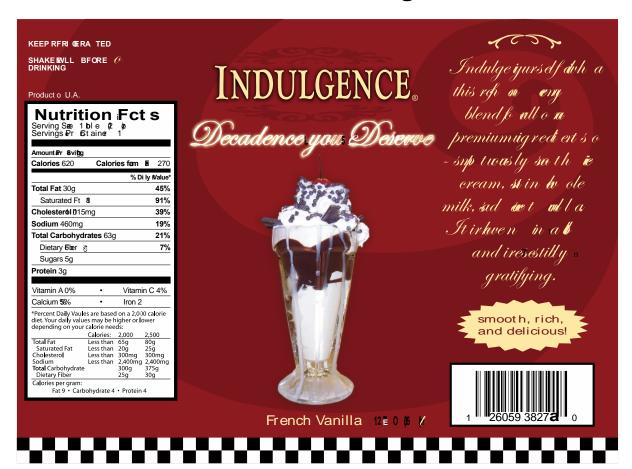


- 2 lb weight loss
- 10 point decrease in systolic blood pressure

"Shake is sensible"



"Shake is indulgent"



 3x greater mitigating effect on ghrelin (hunger inducing and metabolic regulating hormone)



How do mindsets impact health outcomes?

How can we use mindsets to improve healthcare?



Today: Mindsets in Healthcare

- Mindsets & treatment
- Mindsets & illness
- Mindsets & the care team









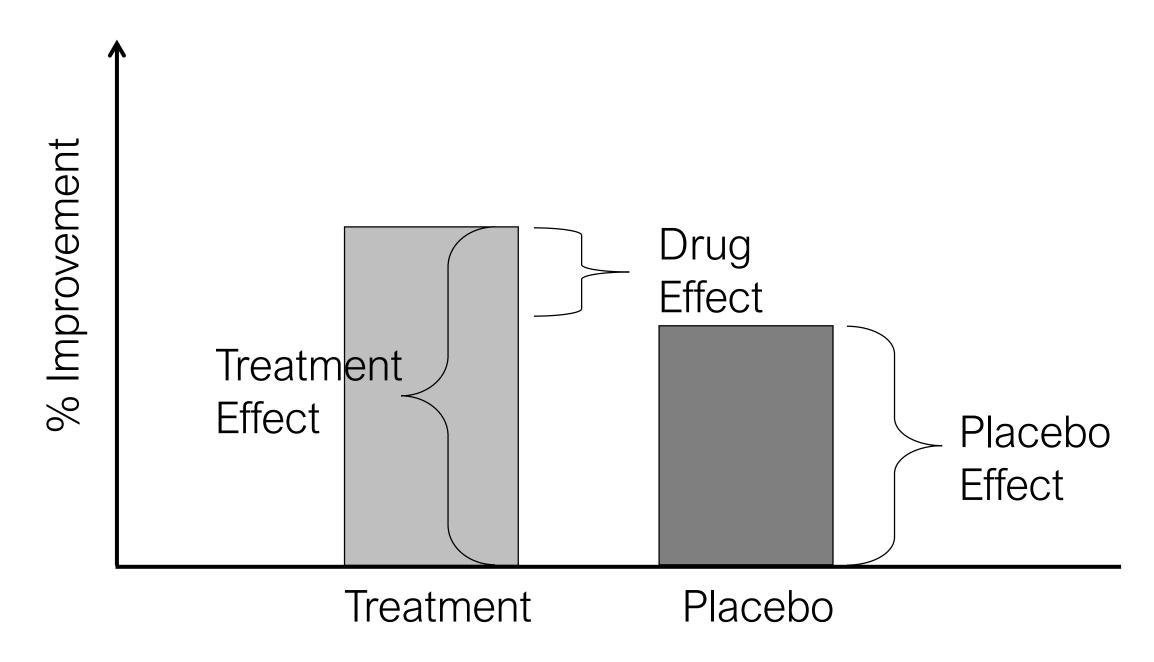
Mindsets & treatment

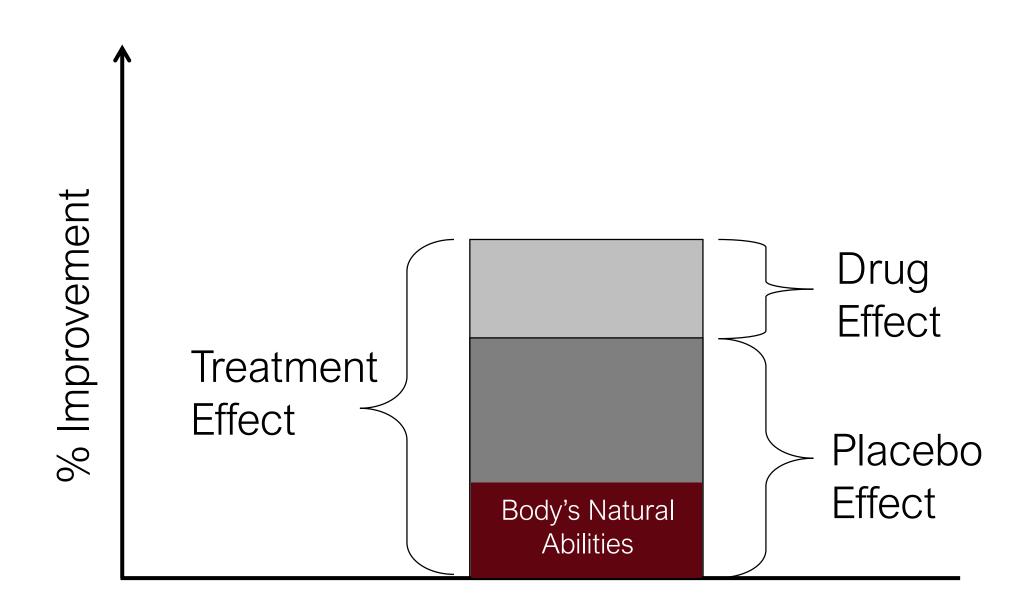


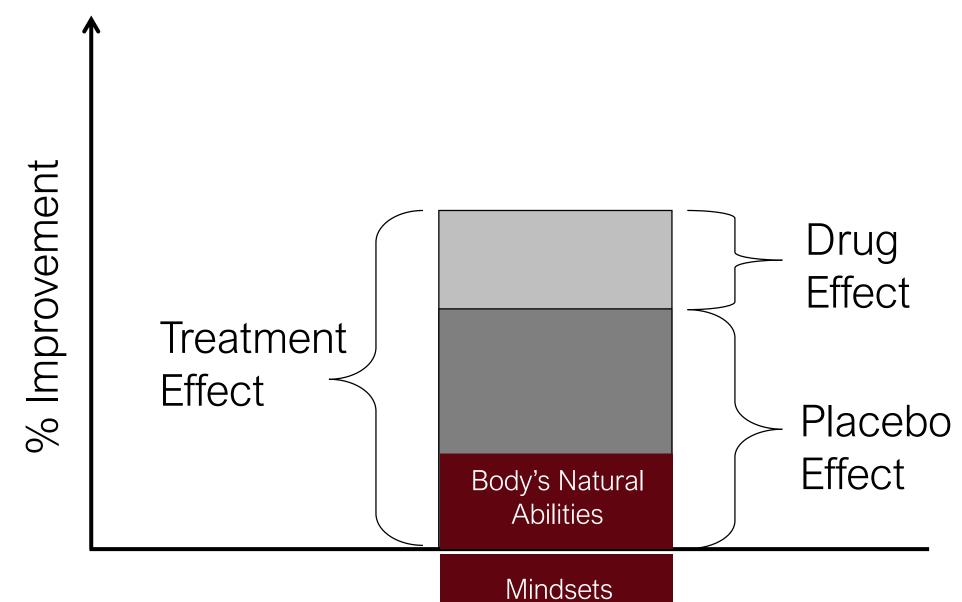
Placebos lead to significant clinical improvement in 60-90% of conditions

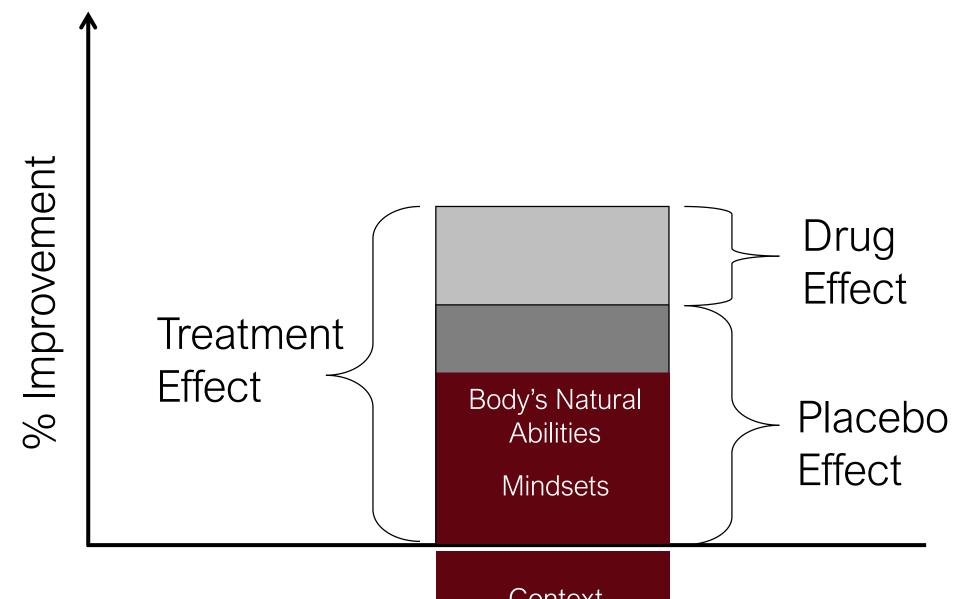
- Pain
- Depression
- Anxiety

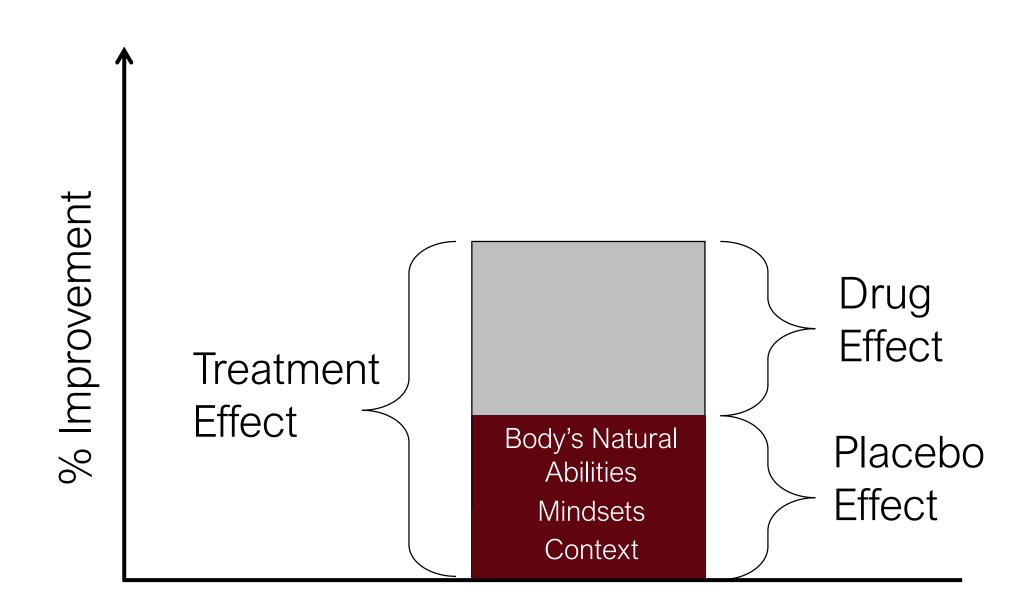
- Parkinson's Disease
- Cardiovascular disorders
- Immune deficiencies
- Respiratory issues

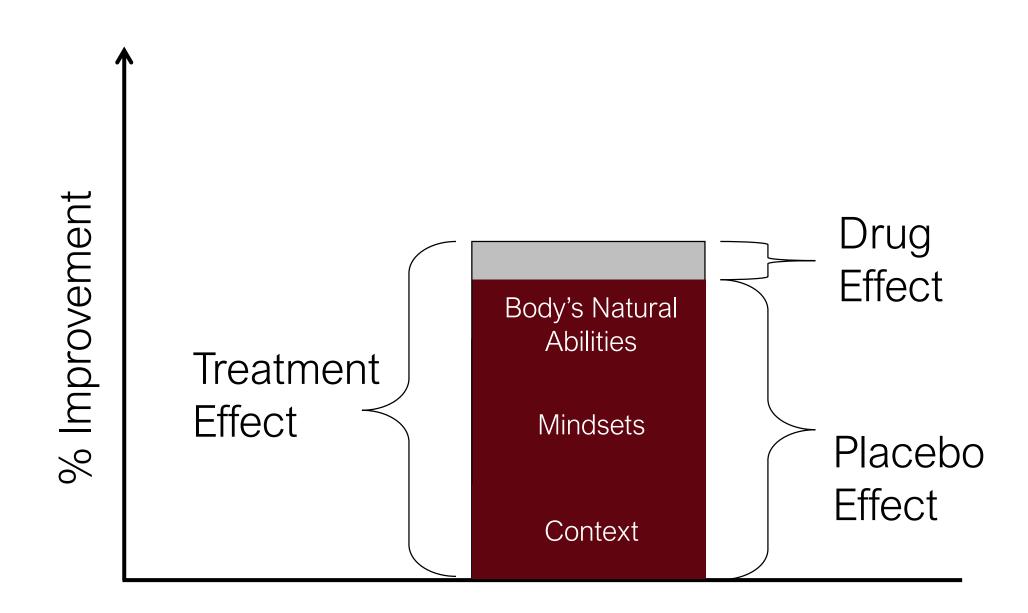


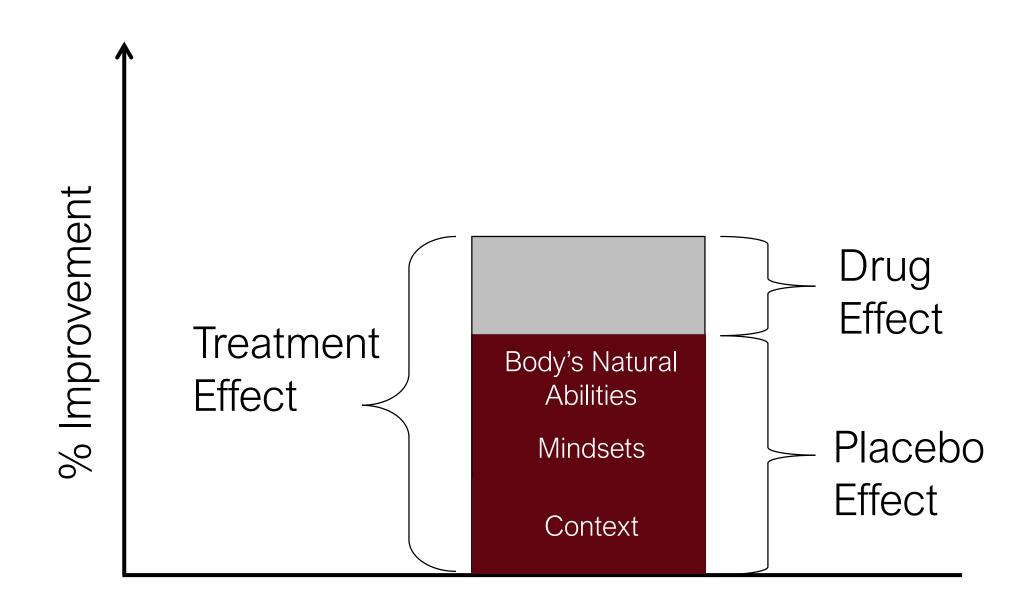


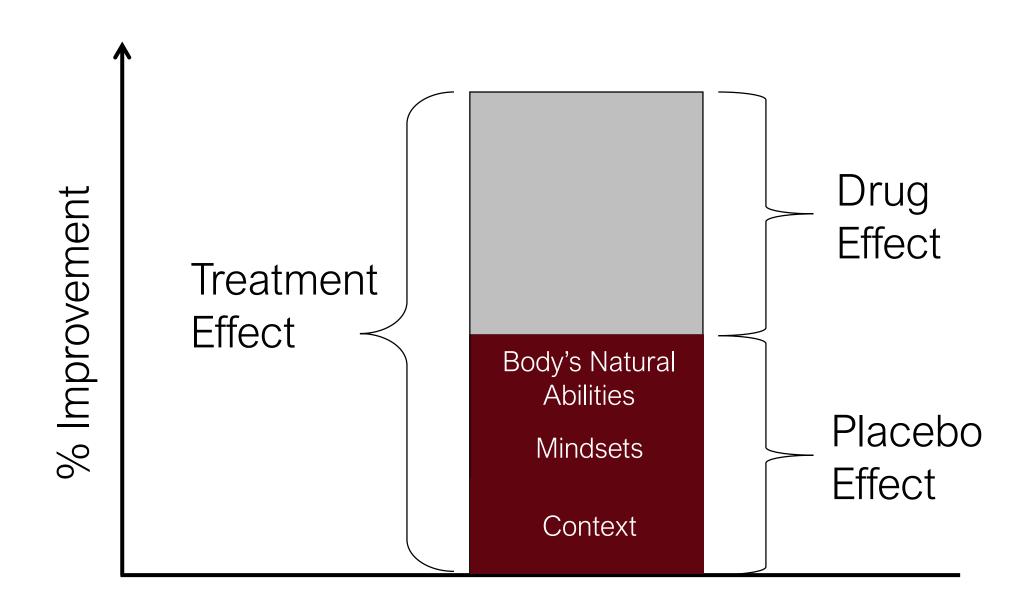


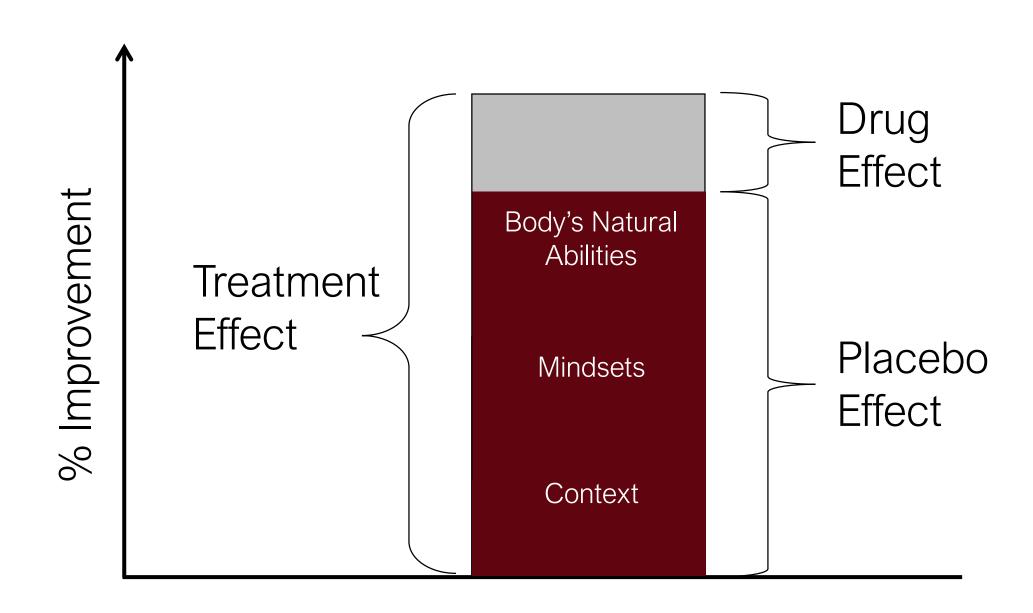






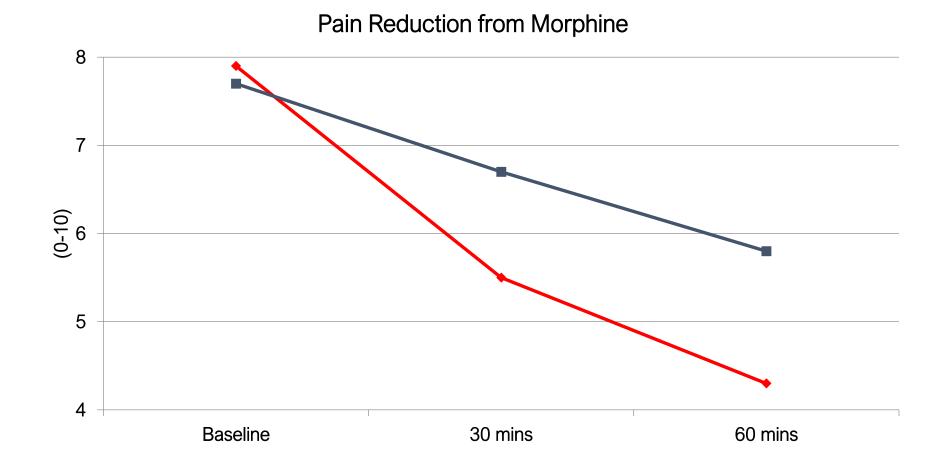






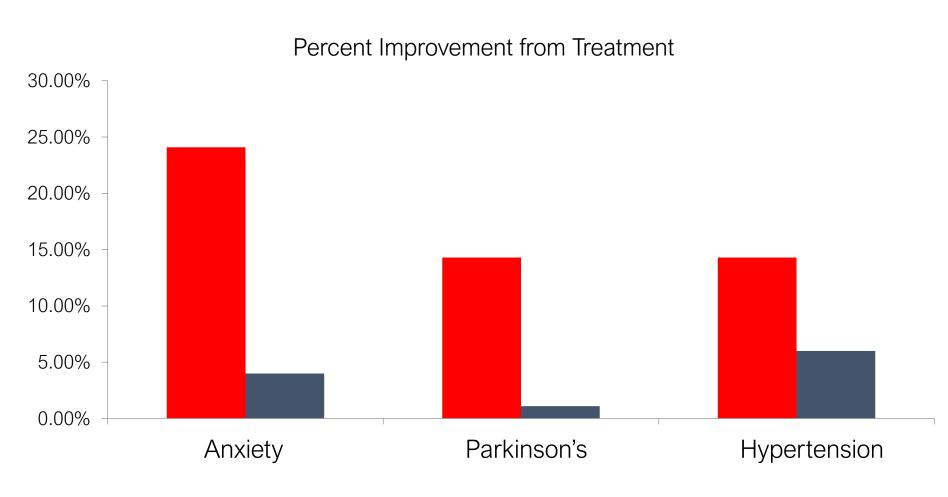












Benedetti et al. 2003 Prevention & Treatment







"This treatment will cause side effects"



Shape mindsets about treatment



Tell patients what you think a treatment is going to do and how it's going to help — truthfully!

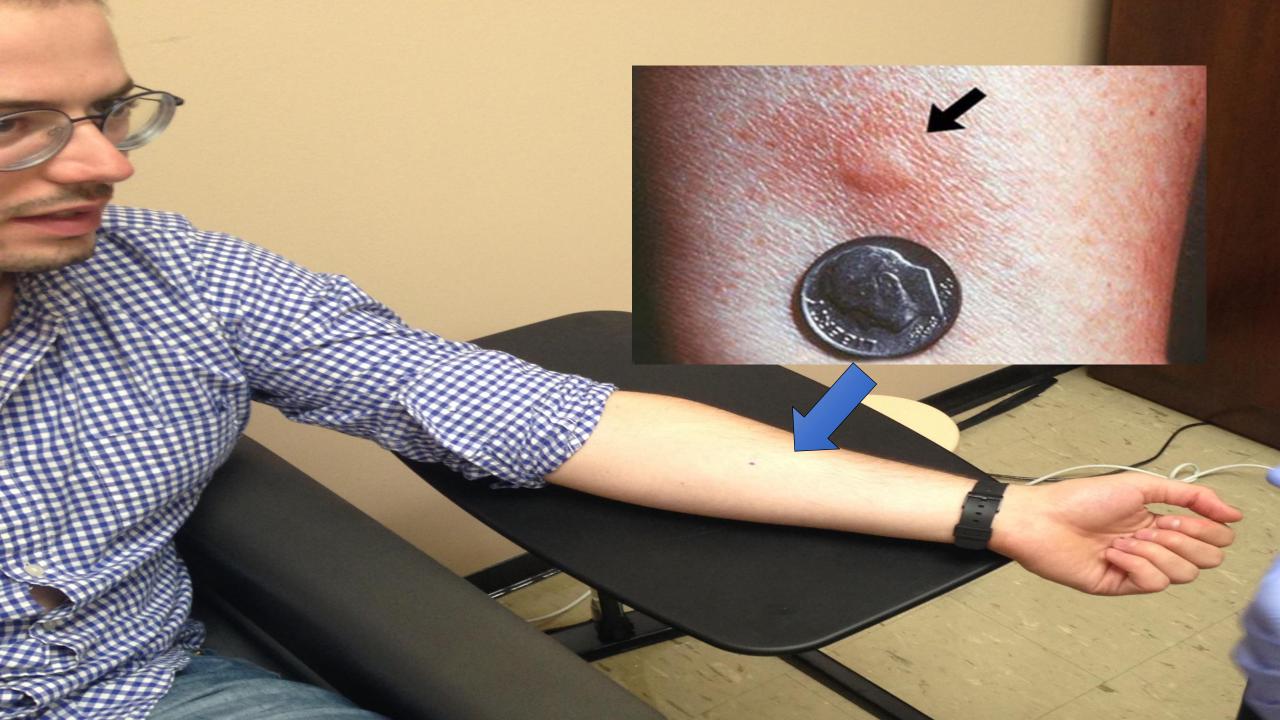


What do you think are the most common reasons patients go to primary care?



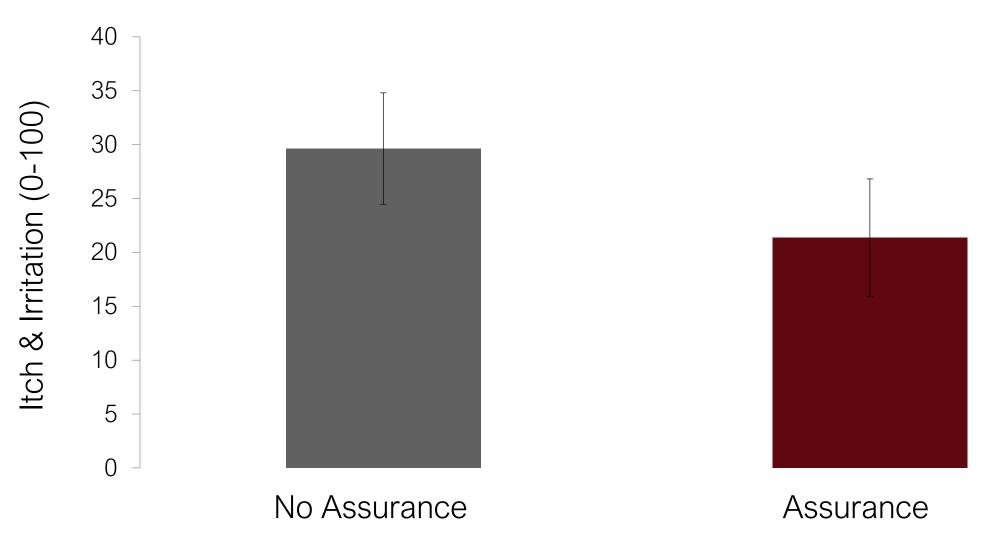
Medication goes unmentioned in 25% of doctors office visits.

68% of patients are looking for an explanation from their doctor Patients often look to the doctor primarily for an explanation



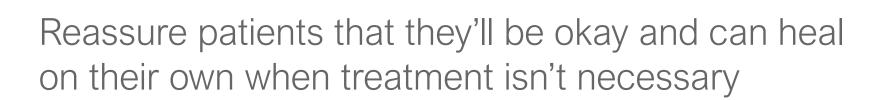


Self-Reported Itchiness



N=76

Shape mindsets about healing without treatment







Mindsets about side effects



Disclosing side effects can make them worse

Disclosing medication side effects can:

- Make them more likely
- Make patients anxious
- Negatively impact medication adherence

Providers have a responsibility to inform patients about side effects of treatment.

Oral immunotherapy treatment for food allergies

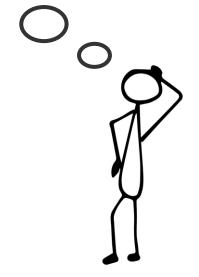


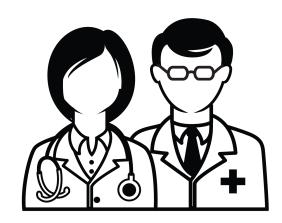


These are uncomfortable side effects of treatment that I should try to minimize

I'm sorry you're not feeling well!

Symptoms are just an unfortunate part of treatment.



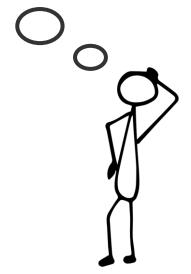


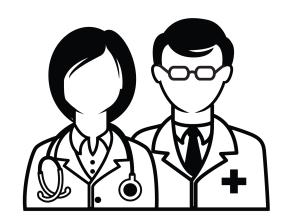


If I'm having symptoms, maybe my allergies are very severe and I'm resistant to treatment

I'm sorry you're not feeling well!

Symptoms are just an unfortunate part of treatment.



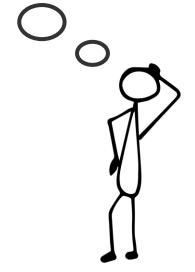


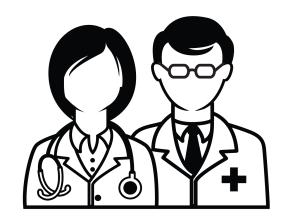


If I'm having symptoms, maybe the treatment is not working for me like it's supposed to

I'm sorry you're not feeling well!

Symptoms are just an unfortunate part of treatment.







Missed mindset: Symptoms can indicate treatment efficacy

When your body is sore postexercise, it means your muscles are getting stronger Fevers signal the body is fighting infection

Wound itching means indicates healing

In oral immunotherapy, symptoms can signal that the body is building desensitization

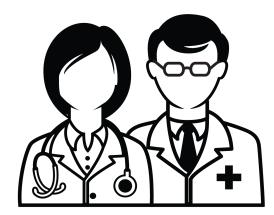


If I'm having symptoms, it means that the treatment is working and my body is getting stronger

I'm sorry you're not feeling well, but symptoms mean the treatment is working!



Symptoms as Positive Signals Mindset





Understanding a "symptoms as positive signals" mindset

Not about making symptoms fun or pleasant

About changing the meaning of symptoms for patients

Not just getting patients to "think positive" or "look on the bright side" Potential to reduce anxiety about symptoms & worry about treatment progress to improve treatment outcomes



Patients:

50 children (72% boys, 28% girls) with severe peanut allergies and their parents

Age 7-17 (mean = 10.83, SD = 3.01)



Two Mindsets about Symptoms

"Symptoms as Side Effects" (24 patients)

Symptoms are an unfortunate side effect of the treatment

"Symptoms as Positive Signals" (26 patients)

Symptoms are a signal that the body is strengthening and treatment is working



Howe, Leibowitz, et al., 2019, Journal of Allergy & Clinical Immunology: In Practice



Treatment structure

Seven monthly group visits to clinic

- Activities to introduce and reinforce mindset
- Surveys to assess anxiety and beliefs about side effects

Dosing at home

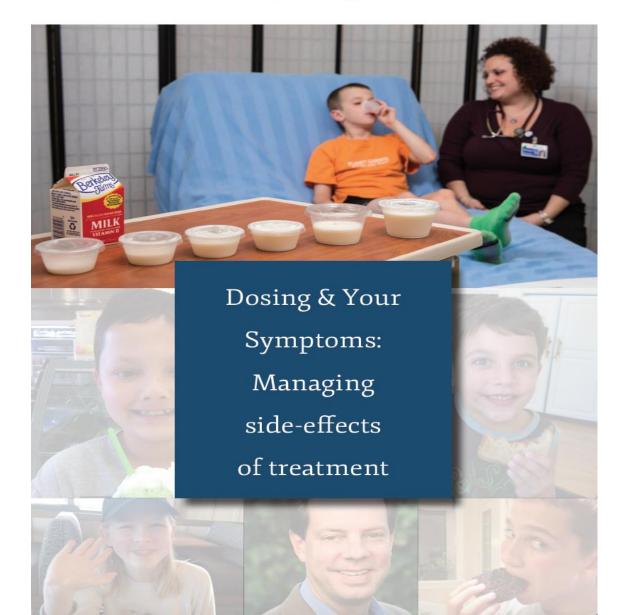
Daily surveys about symptoms

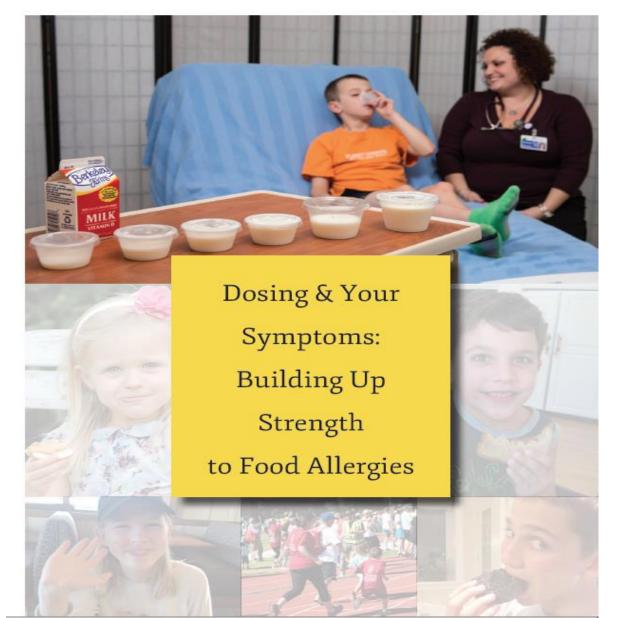


Same safety & symptom management information provided

Same practical information given to both groups

- Dosing information (take with food, drink water, take Zyrtec before dose)
- Safety information (distinguishing common side effects from severe side effects that require when injectable epinephrine)

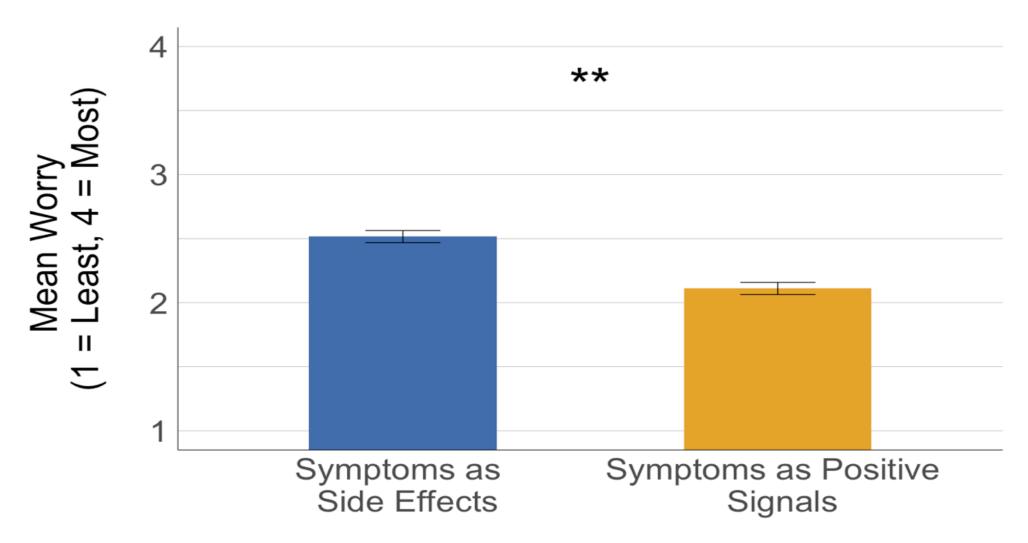






Results

Symptoms as positive signals patients less worried when they have symptoms



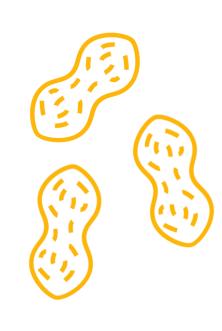
 $t_{Main\ Effect\ of\ Group}$ (69.61) = -2.94, p = .005

Patient contact about symptoms

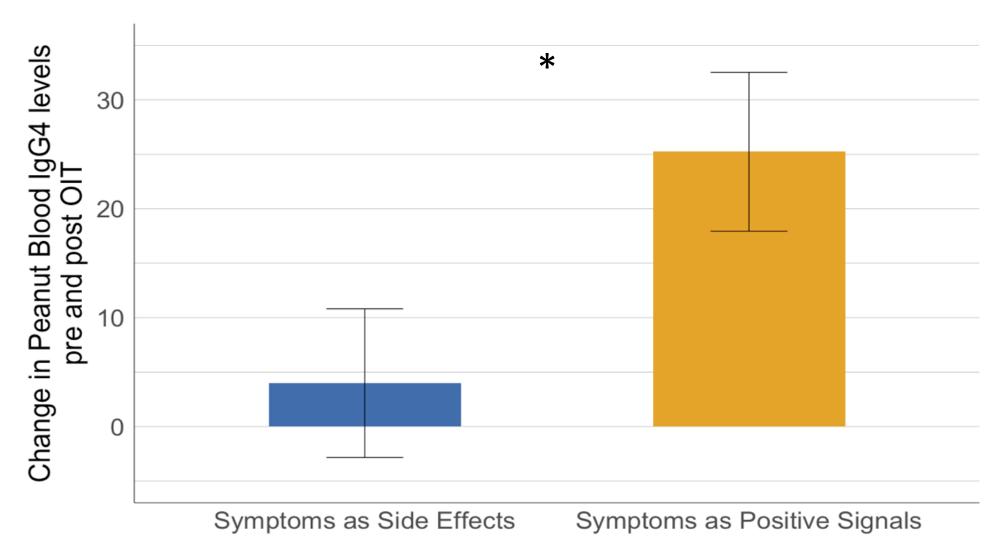
Contact with treatment staff related to symptoms	
Symptoms as Side Effects	17.5% (27/154)
Symptoms as Positive Signals	9.4% (15/159)



Symptoms as positive signals patients were less likely to have side effects at the highest treatment doses.



Symptoms as positive signals patients have improved physiological marker of treatment efficacy





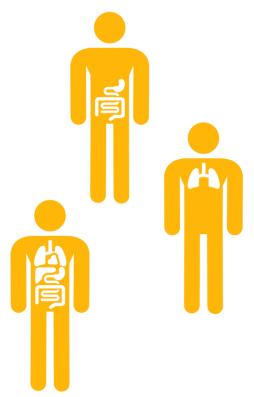
Results Summary:

Patients taught that symptoms are positive signals of treatment efficacy:

- Endorse this mindset
- Were less worried about symptoms
- Contacted staff less about symptoms
- Experienced fewer symptoms at larger doses
- Had greater changes in physiological markers of allergic tolerance



Side effects can truthfully be interpreted as a sign that treatment is active in the body.





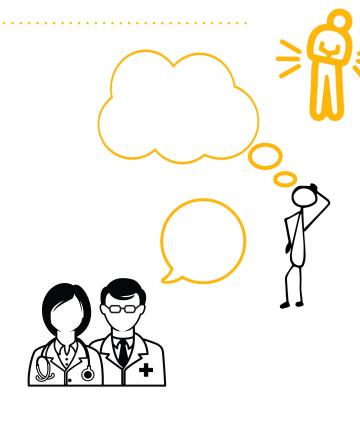
Side effects can indicate treatment efficacy

Antibiotics kill harmful bacteria, but also helpful bacteria in the intestine

Side effects can increase a treatment's effect by strengthening the mindset that treatment is working

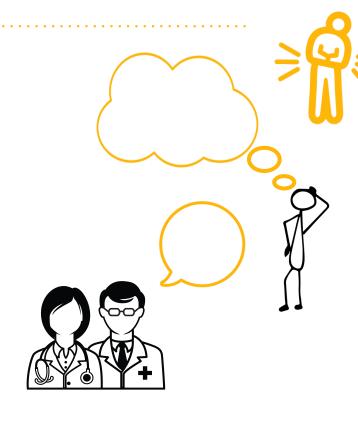
If side effects are truly caused by treatment, it is an indication that the treatment is active in the body and doing *something*

Shape mindsets about side effects



When appropriate, describe side effects as a sign that treatment is active or working in the body

Shape mindsets about side effects



When appropriate, describe side effects as a sign that treatment is active or working in the body – while clearly communicating which side effects require medical attention



Mindsets impact treatment.

- "This treatment will work" = treatments work better
- Reassurance can make patients feel better even without treatment
- "Side effects mean the treatment is active & working" can help reduce patient anxiety and improve treatment experience





Shape patient mindsets about treatment.

- Tell patients why you think treatment will help
- Provide reassurance and be clear when patients will be okay without treatment
- Help patients see minor side effects as a sign that the treatment is active and working





Mindsets & illness



Imagine a patient who has just been diagnosed with a chronic illness.



"ThisTillinseislassagisinag to catastropine"





"This filthessiloessois dealt manaighable"





"Thisising ancantemake some phanges and a challenge to get stronger"





Pain catastrophizing

- Focusing on pain and helplessness the mindset that "pain is a catastrophe":
 - Increases distress
 - Worsens pain
 - Reduces the effectiveness of treatment
 - Puts brain on "high alert" for pain





"Illness is an opportunity"





- Greater life satisfaction
- Better functioning
- Greater perceived health





Contact kleibow@stanford.edu with questions.





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Understanding the "illness can be an opportunity" mindset

Not about saying that illness is a good thing

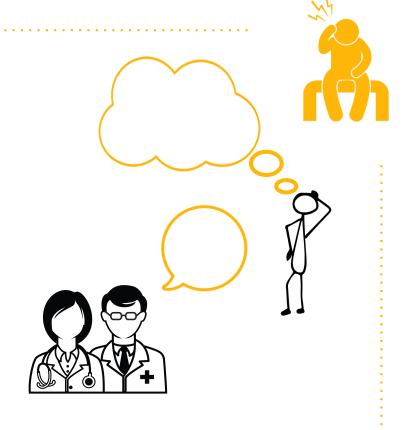
Not suggesting patients should be happy to have an illness

About recognizing that having an illness can change your life in many ways – good & bad

Seeing illness as an opportunity for growth, change, & connection

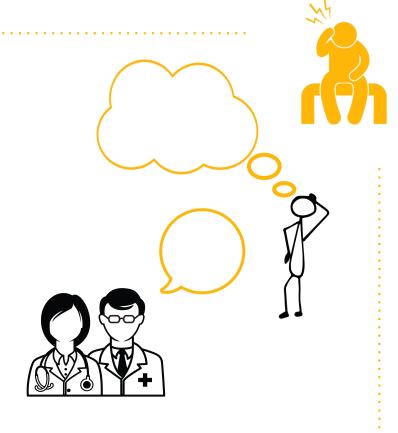
Shape mindsets about illness

Make it clear to patients that illnesses are manageable



Shape mindsets about illness

Make it clear to patients that illnesses are manageable – or even opportunities





Mindsets shape how an illness impacts someone's life

- The mindset that "illness is a catastrophe" leads to worse functioning & worse outcomes
- Patient mindsets are independent of illness severity
- The mindsets that illness is manageable or an opportunity are associated with better health outcomes





Shape patient mindsets about illness to improve functioning and wellbeing.

- Combat the mindset that illness is a catastrophe
- Help patients understand that illnesses are manageable
- Inspire patients to look for opportunities that arise from their illness





Mindsets & the patientprovider relationship

Patient-provider relationships:

- Improved patient satisfaction
- Better outcomes for diabetes patients
- Shortened cold severity and duration
- Improved surgical outcomes and halved opiate requirements







"My provider gets it (the disease, the diagnosis, the treatment)"

Competence

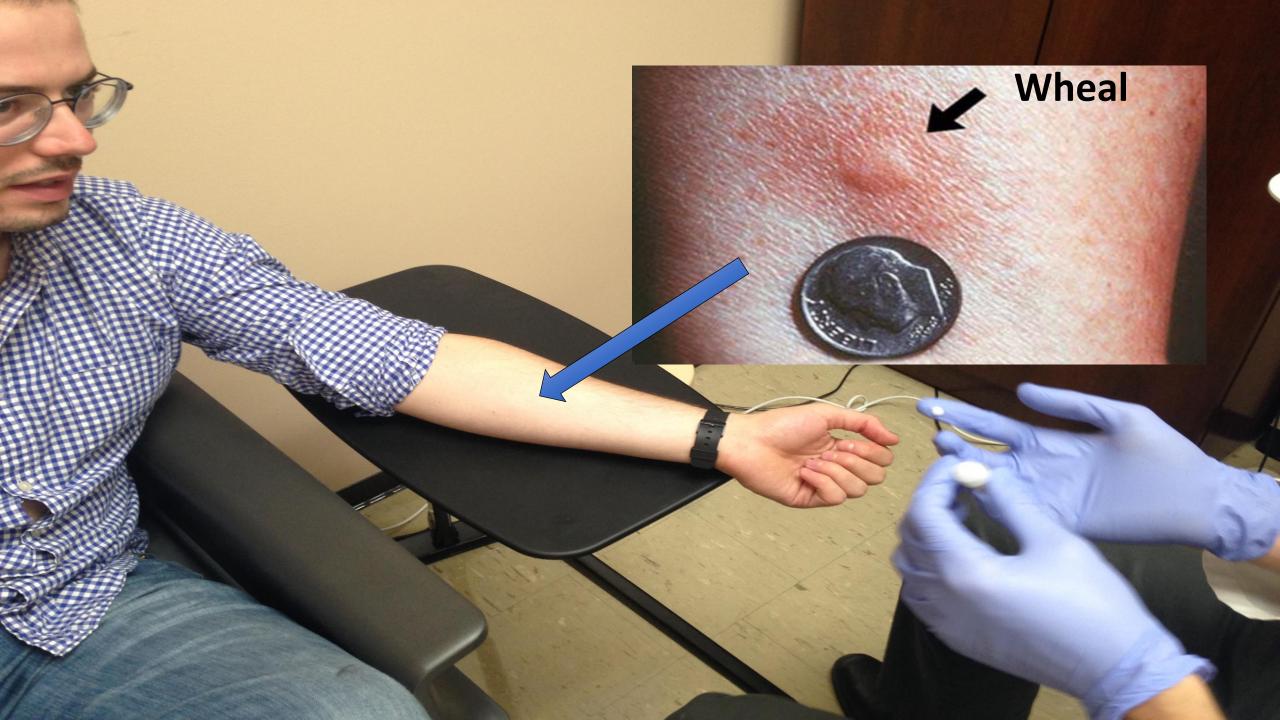




"My provider gets *me* (my goals, my needs, my concerns)"

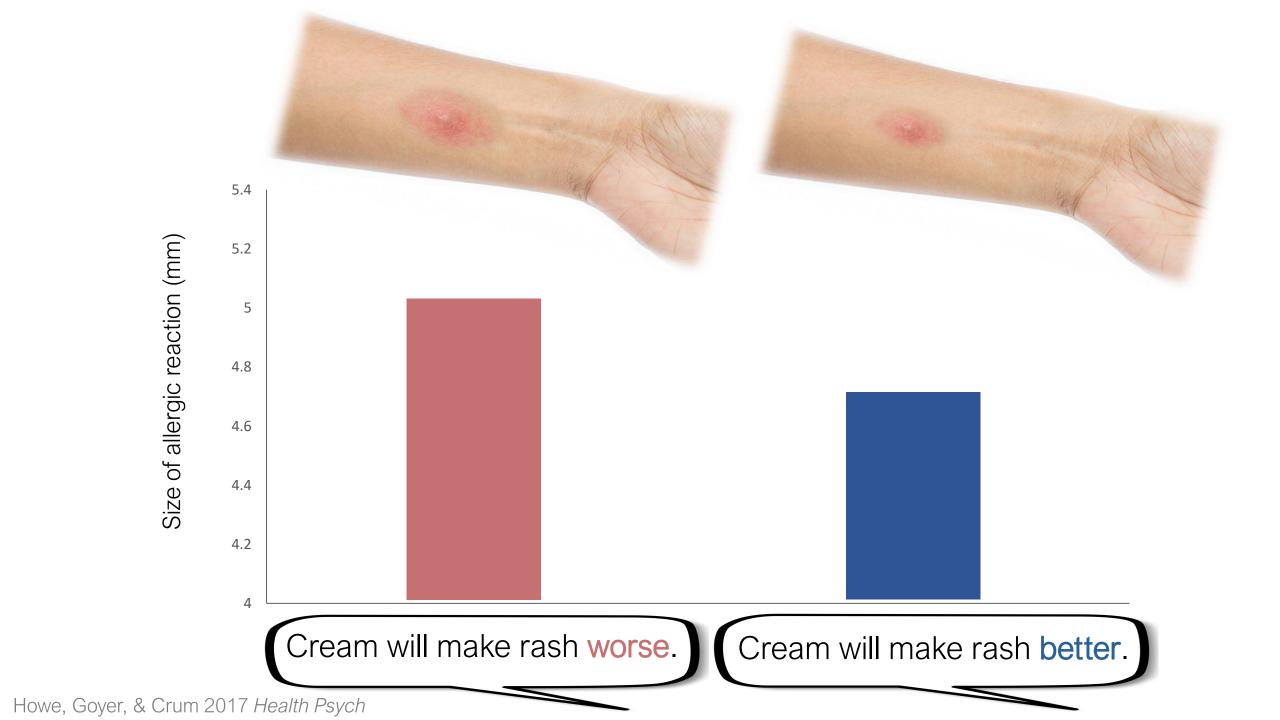
Warmth











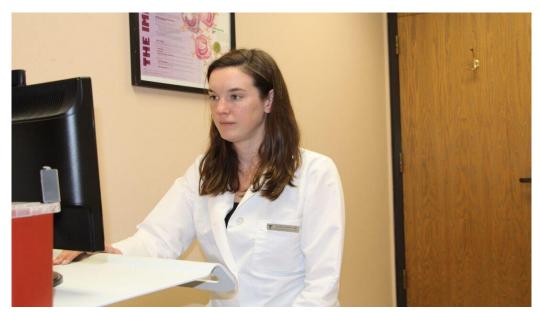
High Warmth



High Competence



Low Warmth



Low Competence



High Warmth



High Competence



Crear

ke rash better.

Howe, Goyer, & Crum 2017 Health Psych

Size of allergic reaction (mm)

5.4

5.2

5

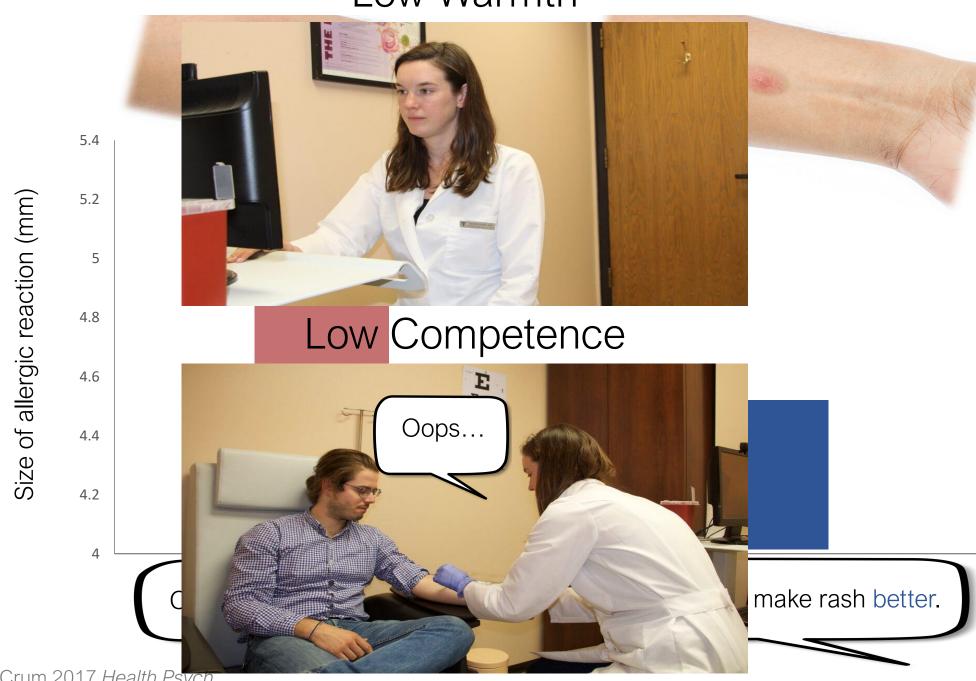
4.8

4.6

4.4

4.2

Low Warmth



Howe, Goyer, & Crum 2017 Health Psych

Shape mindsets about the care team

Instill the mindset that the patient is in good hands: signal to patients that you get *it* (medicine) and *them* (as people)

Shape mindsets about the care team

Instill the mindset that the patient is in good hands: signal to patients that you get *it* (medicine) and *them* (as people)

There's no one right way to do this!



What's one way you signal warmth or competence?







- "Call patients by their first name with a huge smile on my face"
- "Listen generously, use silence"
- "Use 'we' to show that we are in this together"
- "Say 'I'm so glad to see you today'"
- "Establish rapport by asking personal questions"

- "Review chart before visit"
- "Explain my role and how I can help them"
- "Conduct procedures calmly"
- "Explain procedure in detail"
 - "Keep the room clean"
- "Say 'I've seen this many times'"
- "Share rationale for treatment, including my previous experience"



The patient-provider relationship matters.

- A positive, trusting patient-provider relationship can improve patient health outcomes
- Signaling warmth and competence can strengthen this relationship
- When providers signal warmth and competence, their words are more impactful





Shape patient mindsets about the care team.

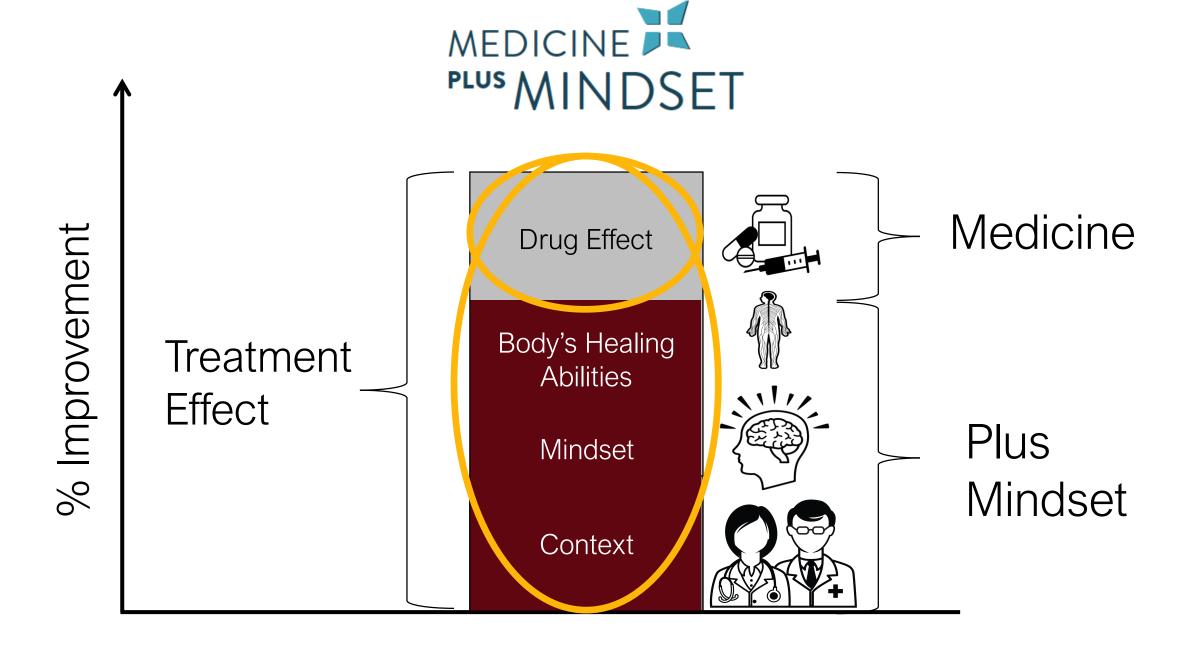
- Signal competence (getting "it") and warmth (getting "them")
- There are many ways to make patients feel like they're in good hands
- Every care team member influences patients' mindsets about the overall warmth and competence of a clinic





Making mindset matter

MEDICINE PLUS MINDSET



Mindsets make the most impact in the right context

Teams, organizations, and cultures can help foster useful mindsets



Stanford Primary Care

Alameda Health System



Stanford Clinics at corporate locations







150+ care team members





150+ care team members
Tens of thousands of patients





Treatment clinics

Wait list control clinics



MEDICINE PLUS MINDSET

Patient outcomes:

Satisfaction
Health behaviors
Health outcomes

Provider wellbeing:

Job satisfaction
Burnout
Mindset



How do mindsets impact health outcomes?



Mindsets impact

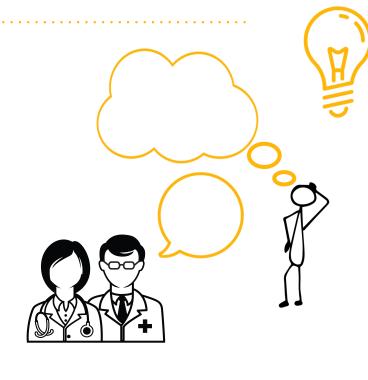
treatment efficacy
wellbeing and functioning with chronic illness
relationships between patients and the care team



How do mindsets impact health outcomes?

How can we use mindsets to improve healthcare?

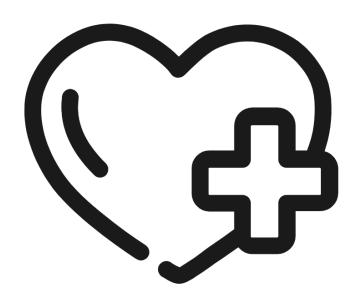
To improve health outcomes, shape patient mindsets



about treatment (this treatment will work for me)
about side effects (side effects mean the treatment is working)
about illness (illness is manageable & can be an opportunity)
about the care team (my providers get it and get me)









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Want more?

Break Out: Implementing Strategies for Utilizing Mindset in Practice



Thanks!

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