

EMDR INFORMED CONSENT

Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR) is a form of therapy that utilizes dual attention stimulation (DAS) usually in the form of eye movements, tapping or auditory tones in order to accelerate the brain's capacity to process and heal a troubling memory, thought, feeling, or phobia.

There is a belief that DAS stimulates the same eye movements which occur during Rapid Eye Movement (REM) or dream sleep.

DAS causes two parts of the brain to work in conjunction in order to reintegrate a memory. Some patients can experience relief or positive effects in just a few sessions and others need more sessions.

EMDR is effective in treating trauma-related symptoms, whether the traumatic event occurred many years ago or yesterday.

Research has demonstrated that EMDR is effective for the treatment of Post Traumatic Stress, phobias, panic attacks, anxiety disorders, stress, sexual and physical abuse, disturbing memories, complicated grief and chronic pain.

The possible **benefits** of EMDR treatment include the following:

1. The memory or event is remembered, but the painful emotions and physical sensations, disturbing images and thoughts are no longer present.
2. EMDR helps the brain reintegrate the memory or event and store it in a more appropriate place in the brain.
3. Patients are able to work from the self energy and be present, tolerant and regulated in the present moment.
4. Improved sleep and relationships.

The patient's own brain reintegrates the memory or event and does the healing.

The possible **risks** of EMDR treatment include the following:

1. Reprocessing a memory or event may bring up associated memories. This is normal and those memories will also be reprocessed.
2. During the EMDR, you may experience physical sensations and retrieve images, emotions, and sounds associated with the memory or event.
3. Reprocessing of the memory or event normally continues after the end of the formal therapy session. Other memories, flashbacks, feelings, and sensations may occur. You may have dreams associated with the memory. Frequently the brain is able to process these additional memories without help, but arrangements for assistance will be made in a timely manner if the patient is unable to cope.

4. After a reprocessing session in phase 4, patients may feel tired or emotional. It is recommended to use the resources developed in earlier phases, to go for a walk, engage in stretches, nap or rest as needed. This is a normal and natural reaction but should still be shared with the therapist.

Termination:

As with any other therapeutic approach, reprocessing traumatic memories can be uncomfortable; that means some people won't like or won't be able to tolerate EMDR treatment well. Others may need more preparation, offered by the therapist, before processing traumatic events using EMDR.

Patients may stop EMDR therapy at any time but are encouraged to dialogue with their clinician for closure or reworking of the treatment plan.

There is no known adverse effect for interrupting EMDR therapy; therefore, you can discontinue treatment at any time.

Alternative therapeutic approaches may include individual or group therapy, medication, or a different psychotherapy modality on an individual basis.

The patient should ideally:

1. Be able to tolerate high levels of emotional disturbance, have the ability to reprocess associated memories resulting from EMDR therapy, and should be able to use self-control and relaxation techniques such as calm place, container. Many patients are not able to use calm place and therefore it is a suggestion and not a "requirement".
2. Disclose to me and consult with their physician before EMDR therapy if there is a history of current eye problems, diagnosed heart disease, elevated blood pressure, or are at risk for or have a history of stroke, heart attack, seizure or other limiting medical conditions that may pose a medical risk. Pregnant women should consult with their physician. Due to the stress related to reprocessing some traumatic events, postponing may be appropriate in some cases.
3. Inform the clinician if they wear contact lenses and remove them if they impede eye movements due to irritation or eye dryness. EMDR will immediately be discontinued if patients report any eye pain and other forms of stimulation can be substituted, if appropriate.
4. Before participating in EMDR, discuss with the clinician all aspects of an upcoming legal court case where testimony is required. Patients may need to postpone EMDR treatment if you are the victim or witness to a crime that is being prosecuted because the traumatic material processed using EMDR may fade, blur or disappear and your testimony may be challenged.
5. Consult with their medical doctor before utilizing medication. Some medications may reduce the effectiveness of EMDR, for example, benzodiazepines may reduce effectiveness possibly due to state-dependent processing and/or regression may occur after ceasing antidepressants.
6. EMDR is contraindicated with recent most drugs including crack cocaine users and long-term amphetamine users.
7. Discuss with the clinician any dissociative disorders with little treatment progress. EMDR may trigger these symptoms but may also be helpful in attempting to resolve them.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF EMDR LISTED ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THAT I CAN END EMDR THERAPY AT ANYTIME. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATED IN EMDR THERAPY AND I ASSUME ANY RISKS INVOLVED IN SUCH PARTICIPATION.

Name (printed) _____

Signature _____

Date _____