

Placebo

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

This tutorial will discuss the Placebo Effect by focusing on:

1. Placebo

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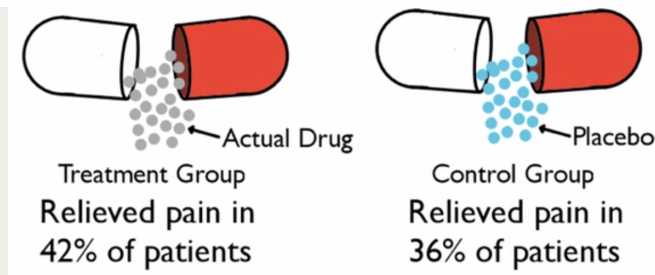
In basic terms, **placebo** is a fake treatment. That doesn't mean that people don't respond to it; instead, they think or expect that the treatment will result in a change. A placebo doesn't *do* anything. It has no active treatment, yet people feel better anyway as if they have willed themselves to feel better. This is called the **Placebo Effect**.

While the treatment group gets the actual drug, the control group receives a placebo as their treatment. They get the fake drug with no active ingredient in it--usually some kind of a sugar or something. It doesn't do anything and has no active ingredient.

Sometimes, the treatment containing the actual drug doesn't work any better than the placebo. This can happen. It's evidence against the treatment working.

IN CONTEXT

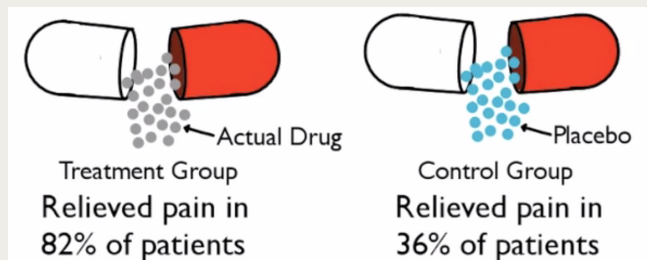
Suppose that you developed a treatment that relieved pain and you conducted a study on pain. You had a control group receiving a sugar pill and a treatment group receiving the actual drug that you created. Here are your results.



Would you say that your treatment is effective? Why or why not?

The answer is here is that your treatment is not very effective. The numbers, 42 and 36, are not far apart. These results would be weak evidence for the effectiveness of the drug.

What if the results looked like this?



Notice that you still have 36% of patients in the placebo group reporting relief of pain. However, the difference between 36% and 80% is significant. This would be considered the evidence for the effectiveness of the drug.



TERMS TO KNOW

Placebo

An inert drug or treatment given to the control group. It has no active ingredient in it.

Placebo Effect

The observed phenomenon whereby certain individuals will exhibit a desired response even when taking a placebo, which contains no active ingredient.



SUMMARY

Placebos are a form of control. They're a fake drug. People can respond to the fake drug, thinking they are receiving treatment, which is called the Placebo Effect. Experimenters will assess the effectiveness of the treatment against the effectiveness of the placebo. If the gap between the two is significant, it is

considered evidence that treatment has a considerable effect.

Good luck!

Source: THIS TUTORIAL WAS AUTHORED BY JONATHAN OSTERS FOR SOPHIA LEARNING. PLEASE SEE OUR [TERMS OF USE](#).



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