

# A Randomized Clinical Trial of CBT App versus Active Control App for Irritable Bowel Syndrome



Simay Ipek (COL 22)  
 Hannah Erdogan (COL 22)  
 Graham Janson (COL 22)  
 Dr. Melissa Hunt

## BACKGROUND

- **Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)** is a chronic GI disorder characterized by abdominal pain and altered bowel habits.
- **Prevalence:** ~10% of US population
- **Psychiatric comorbidity with IBS:** up to 90% in treatment seeking patients
- **Impact on Quality of Life:** physical and emotional burdens and disability
- **Treatment of Choice:** GI-specific Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- **Limited Access to Care because of...**
  - Few GI-knowledgeable CBT therapists
  - Financial constraints

## METHODS

- Participants recruited from a variety of online platforms (e.g.. Facebook, Reddit, Quora)
- Participants were **randomly allocated** to Treatment (TX) or Active Control (AC) groups.
- TX group used the Zemedly 2.0 app for 8 weeks, while the AC used an educational and relaxation training active control app.
- At 8 weeks, both groups completed follow-up surveys, and AC was crossed over to active treatment.
- Recruitment is still ongoing.

## RESULTS

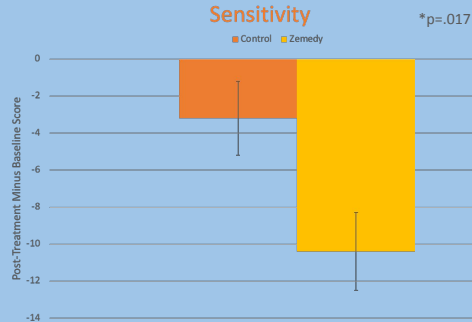
- Both the TX group and the AC group improved on the primary outcome measures of Health Related Quality of Life and GI symptom severity.
- The treatment group improved significantly more on overall IBS severity, catastrophizing, fear of food and anxiety about visceral sensations.

## CONCLUSION

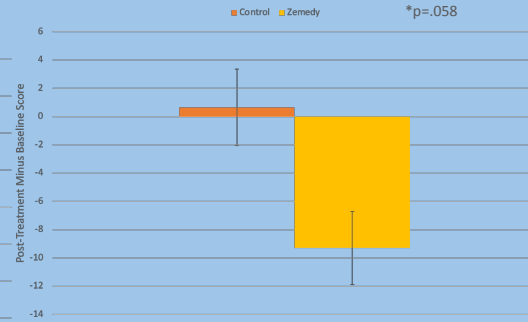
- Control app front-loaded two active components of treatment (education and relaxation).
- But Zemedly is changing the underlying *core vulnerabilities* in IBS.

# A CBT Smartphone App for IBS Improves Visceral Anxiety and Fear of Food

Zemedly Significantly Improved Visceral

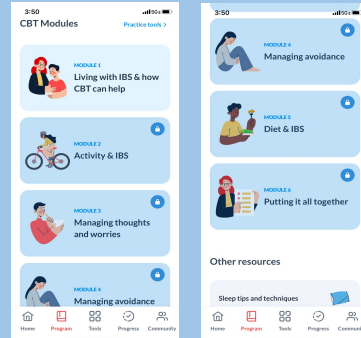


Zemedly Significantly Improved Fear of Food



Among the outcome measures, the TX group reported a statistically significant improvement in the VSI and fear of food measures compared to the control group participants.

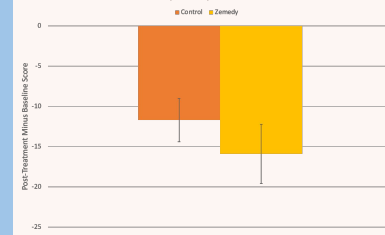
A snapshot of the Zemedly 2.0 app. Participants primarily work through the six modules containing CBT exercises and educational content.



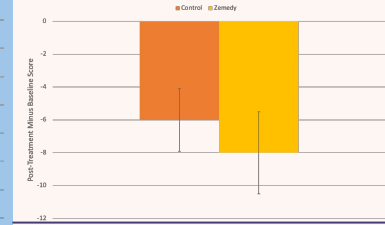
Take a picture to download the protocol paper



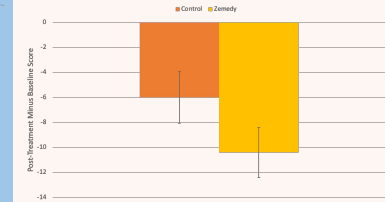
Both Groups Improved in HRQL



Both Groups Improved in GI Symptom Severity



Zemedly Significantly Improved Catastrophizing



Zemedly Significantly Improved IBS Symptom Severity (Rome IV)

