Effects of functional relaxation and guided imagery on IgE in dust-mite allergic adult asthmatics: a randomized, controlled clinical trial.

Although relaxation and imagination techniques have repeatedly proven their effectiveness in asthma, nothing is known about the immunological effects of these complementary interventions. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the effects of the brief relaxation technique of functional relaxation (FR) with guided imagery (GI) on serum IgE in adult patients with dust mite allergic asthma in a randomized, controlled trial. Sixty-four patients were treated over a 4-week period and assessed at baseline, after treatment and after 4 months for follow-up. Due to its significant role in the pathophysiology of allergic asthma, the serum IgE was employed as outcome measure in this investigation. Participation in FR, GI, and FR/GI led to decreases in serum IgE (IU/mL) of -54.7 +/- 67.1, -49.5 +/- 93.4, and -28.4 +/- 93.9 compared with an increase of 27.7 +/- 43.2 in CI. Our study confirmed a positive and clinically relevant effect of FR and GI on total serum IgE levels.