



CAN PRACTICING UNDER STRESS ON A CATARACT SURGERY SIMULATOR PROTECT OPHTHALMOLOGY RESIDENTS FROM CHOKING UNDER PRESSURE IN THE OR?

LINDSAY MANDEL | Weill Cornell Medicine

PURPOSE To ascertain whether residents perform better on the EyeSi surgical simulator at a stressful team competition when they practice under comparable stressors.

METHODS Six residents with established baseline performance were randomized into groups A and B and encouraged to practice individually. During phase 1, A also practiced under faculty observation, the “stressor.” Performance was reassessed under the stress of competition. Phase 2 was identical except both groups practiced under stress. Differences in aggregate scores (Σ individual scores) between baseline and each competition were computed to ascertain effects of the intervention.

RESULTS Each group had a PGY2, PGY3, and PGY4. Group A accumulated fewer practice hours than B (A: 13.1, B: 16.7 hours), yet exhibited smaller decline in aggregate score between baseline and first competition (A: -12.6, B: -13.7 points). After the stressor was equalized between groups, both showed improvement from baseline to second competition (A: +19.4, B: +5.3 points).

CONCLUSION While the data from this pilot study are insufficient to conclude whether stress training benefited surgeons’ performance under stress, the observed trend of improvement warrants further investigation in a larger controlled study.