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Summary

IMPACT OF IMMERSIVE VIRTUAL REALITY DURING OUTPATIENT SEDATION-FREE COLONOSCOPY: A RANDOMIZED PROSPECTIVE CONTROLLED STUDY

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Colorectal

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A prospective controlled study of 63 patients found that immersive virtual reality during unsedated colonoscopy significantly reduced pain and anxiety compared to standard care without impairing communication.

KEY POINTS

- Patients using a VR headset with nature scenes during colonoscopy reported significantly lower per-procedural pain (mean EVS 0.44 vs 1.32, p<0.01) and post-procedural anxiety (mean STAI 47 vs 53, p<0.01) compared to controls.
- The VR group showed significantly greater comfort on the Gloucester scale (p<0.01) and a larger decrease in anxiety scores from baseline (8 points vs 4 points, p<0.01).
- No patients reported communication difficulties with staff due to the VR headset, no technical problems occurred, and no adverse events were observed during the immersive experience.
- Time to caecal intubation was slightly lower in the VR group without reaching statistical significance (19 min vs 26 min, p=0.07).
- This material is most relevant for gastroenterologists and endoscopy units considering non-pharmacological alternatives to sedation for colonoscopy.

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