

Hyper-realistic babies as alternative therapy for elderly people with Alzheimer's disease

LOCATION: Granada

LENGTH: 1'44"

SUMMARY: In the nursing home San Juan de Dios in Granada, they use 'Reborn babies' as a new therapy to counter the cognitive decline of elderly people with Alzheimer's disease. They provide relief in moments of agitation or anxiety, and are an alternative to drug treatment. In one year, they have managed to reduce 'negative episodes' by 60%.

VTR:

They look real. They're known as 'Reborn Babies' or hyper-realistic babies. In the San Juan de Dios nursing home in Granada, they are used as therapy for elderly people with Alzheimer's disease.

Inmaculada Quirós
Occupational therapist

"People with Alzheimer's and with quite advanced decline tend to have fits and panic attacks, episodes of anxiety and crying, so the baby helps us. It's basically a relaxation technique, to produce positive and pleasant emotions."

Thanks to this new therapy, since they first started to use it at the beginning of 2016, they have managed to reduce the negative episodes of residents by 60%. These babies seem a lot like real ones in terms of their features, the texture of their skin and their weight.

Inmaculada Quirós
Occupational therapist

"People with dementia, with quite advanced Alzheimer's, think it is a real baby, and so they treat it, take care of it and handle it as if it were a real baby."

Soledad López
Assistant

"Many go up to them to see if they're sleeping, to see if they're comfortable. They even stay and watch them for a while, and this calms them too, because it's like they are looking after them."

Inmaculada is the occupational therapist at this centre, and the one who coordinates this therapy, which perfectly complements the drug treatment that is administered in cases of distress, agitation or anxiety. The therapeutic value of these 'reborn babies' is in the tranquility that they produce and the positive emotions stimulated by rocking a baby.

Inmaculada Quirós
Occupational therapist

"We have managed to reduce quite a few episodes of anxiety with a non-drug treatment, which, in the end, is what we seek and hope for."

As well as the emotional benefits, there are also physical benefits, as activities such as dressing or undressing them involve working on coordination and motor skills.