

Editorial

Improving Mental Health in Older Adults

Virginia Lee^{1*}

¹LCSW R PsyD Student at Walden and CHE Behavioral Health Services and Independent Licensed Clinical Social Worker, USA

***Correspondence author:** Virginia Lee, LCSW R PsyD Student at Walden and CHE Behavioral Health Services and Independent Licensed Clinical Social Worker, USA; Email: vleeLCSW@gmail.com

Citation: Lee V. Improving Mental Health in Older Adults. J Neuro Onco Res. 2023;3(1):1-2.

<https://doi.org/10.46889/JNOR.2023.3201>

Received Date: 21-04-2023

Accepted Date: 08-05-2023

Published Date: 15-05-2023



Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CCBY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Editorial

There are significant mental health disparities in older people in underserved communities and disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups. Blacks are less inclined to have a mental diagnosis or receive mental health treatments [1]. Older Asian American women have higher rates of suicidal ideations and completions than women from other ethnic and racial groups. Blacks' and Hispanics' incidence of the disease is higher (2x and 1.5x respectively), but receiving a diagnosis is much lower [1]. There is a correlation between mental health conditions and cognitive impairment. Contributor factors are stress, disparities that put them at risk for cognitive impairments, ageism increased other forms of discrimination and mental health issues [1].

Depression for older adults can impact their brain health. Depression is associated with depressive symptoms, psychomotor retardation, insomnia, restlessness, loss of concentration and suicidal thoughts. Neurology report that there was evidence that the sense of smell is related to cognitive impairment and dementia and demonstrates longitudinal relationships with brain volume loss in specific brain areas and cognitive decline [2].

Depression affects older adults and it often goes undiagnosed. Signs of depression don't appear the way they do with younger adults. They can more often show up as lethargy, lack of motivation and lack of energy rather than sadness. Depression is not a normal part of aging. Psychotherapy can change the structure of the brain [3]. Dr. Frank Anderson, a Harvard Medical School-trained, expert in psychiatry and Internal Family Systems discussed an evidence-based study on Prozac working 47% and exercising working 42% in terms of effectiveness.

Potentially increasing BDNF (Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor) increases neural plasticity, stress reduction and resilience, Lifestyle interventions that would benefit from healthy brain health and extend longevity. Mindfulness-based cognitive behavioral therapy, Stress management, boxed breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, eating healthy food, movements and making dietary changes. Nutritional deficiencies may be a contributor to major depression.

The four patterns recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans were the Healthy Eating Index 2015, Alternate Mediterranean Diet, Healthful Plan-based Diet and Alternate Healthy Eating Index. Those who followed closely were less likely to die from cardiovascular disease cancer or respiratory disease [4]. Eating more Omega 3s, eating fish at least two times a week, colorful fruits and vegetables, leafy greens, lettuces, lean meat, tryptophan, probiotics, low GI carbohydrates, turmeric, saffron, vitamins, minerals, selenium, lavender, passionflower and chamomile. Use vinegar, lemon, herbs and spices in place of salt. Limits baked goods and High GI carbohydrates. Stay away from processed food. Processed food is found in two-thirds of the food market. Research studies have indicated how we eat impacts how we feel. Healthy eating is protective of our mental health. The current epidemic of mental health can be a result of eating processed foods, sugars, fats and chemicals [5].

Consult with a registered dietician and your medical provider before going on any dietary changes.

Sleep hygiene is important. Sleep in a cool room. Limit television, computer, or other exposure to blue light at least two hours

before bedtime. Go to bed at the same time every night. Limit alcohol or drugs. Alcohol may be sedative but can disrupt REM (Rapid Eye Movement) stages of sleep. Journaling before sleep helps to improve memory. The room is at a cool temperature for sleep. Sleep and get up at the same time +/-20 minutes every day. Practicing good hygiene is better than being on medication. Floss your teeth for oral health and cognitive preservation.

Engaging with others. Social engagement is important and protects against cognitive decline. Volunteer for a cause, attend a local concert or gathering and set aside calling friends or family members to renew social connections, Movement activities are important for older adults in regulating their cortisol and cognitive improvements. Creativity, Dancing and arts help to build new synapses for older adults. When we create art, we increase the brain's plasticity. It's a positive effect. It's good to consult with a mental health professional when one is experiencing major changes in mental health.

Keywords: Mental Health; Cancer; High GI Carbohydrates; Drugs

Conflict of Interest

The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

References

1. Goldman LA, Vinson L. Mental health and aging: How research and philanthropy can help advance equity. Clin Gerontologist. 2023;46(2):138-42.
2. Tian Q, An Y, Kitner-Triolo MH, Davatzikos C, Studenski SA, Ferrucci L, et al. Associations of olfaction with longitudinal trajectories of brain volumes and neuropsychological function in older adults. Neurol. 2023;100(9):e964-74
3. Levitin DJ. Successful aging: A neuroscientist explores the power and potential of our lives. Penguin. 2020.
4. Matthew S. A combination of healthy diets linked with longer life. Harvard Health Publishing. 2023.
5. Kaplan BJ, Rucklidge JJ. The better brain: overcome anxiety, combat depression and reduce ADHD and stress with nutrition. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 2021.

Journal of Neuro and Oncology Research



Publish your work in this journal

Journal of Neuro and Oncology Research is an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal publishing original research, reports, editorials, reviews and commentaries. All aspects of neurology and oncology health maintenance, preventative measures and disease treatment interventions are addressed within the journal. Neurologist or oncologist and other researchers are invited to submit their work in the journal. The manuscript submission system is online and journal follows a fair peer-review practices.

Submit your manuscript here: <https://athenaeumpub.com/submit-manuscript/>