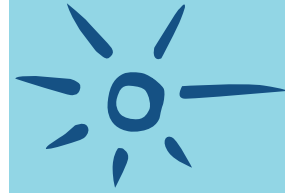


In the Mood



A Newsletter for the Friends of the Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression
Wesley Woods Center of Emory University

Volume 2, Issue 3
Fall/Winter 2003

You've heard the statistics on how patients with chronic medical illnesses are at a higher risk for developing major depression than the average healthy person. Alzheimer's disease, stroke, Parkinson's disease, and other illnesses can all increase the risk of developing depression.

Recently, however, **NEW RESEARCH HAS FOCUSED ON HOW CAREGIVERS OF PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS ARE AT RISK FOR DEVELOPING DEPRESSION.** The Fall 2002 issue of the Family Caregiver Alliance newsletter calls caregiver depression a "silent health crisis" because caregivers are often reluctant to admit their feelings. **IT IS ESTIMATED THAT ABOUT 20% OF FAMILY CAREGIVERS SUFFER FROM DEPRESSION.**

In the effort of providing the best possible care for a family member or friend, caregivers often put the physical and emotional health of the patient above their own. Even the most strong and capable person can feel down or overwhelmed due to strain. One can feel anger, anxiety, sadness, isolation, exhaustion, and then guilt for having those feelings.

Not everyone who cares for someone with a chronic illness will experience depressive symptoms. It is not a sign of weakness or giving up for a caregiver to acknowledge their unwanted feelings and take

steps to deal with them. There are many organizations available to provide support and guidance for caregivers of older adults. Please visit the website of the Area Agency on Aging for the Atlanta region at www.agingatlanta.com for links to caregiver resources.

For more information on depression in caregivers, please visit the website of the Family Caregiver Alliance at www.caregiver.org.

**NOVEMBER IS
National Caregiver Month!
Don't forget to thank
your favorite caregiver!**

SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

- :-(Feeling sad or numb
- :-(No interest or pleasure in things you used to enjoy
- :-(Crying easily or for no reason
- :-(Feeling slowed down or feeling restless and irritable
- :-(Feeling worthless or guilty
- :-(Change in appetite; unintended change in weight
- :-(Trouble recalling things, concentrating or making decisions
- :-(Headaches, backaches or digestive problems
- :-(Problems sleeping, or wanting to sleep all of the time
- :-(Feeling tired all of the time
- :-(Thoughts about death or suicide





Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression Director's Note

Who to call

To reach the Fuqua Center, please call (877) 498-0096.

For appointments, ask for Deangelia Igodan.

For information on ECT, ask for Jocelyn Porquez, FNP.

For information on depression or community education, ask for Laura Britan.

For community clinical services, ask for Patty Joy.

For telemedicine, ask for Eve Byrd, FNP.

For newsletter comments or inquiries, ask for Shannon Tuohy.

For information about Transitions Senior Program, a day treatment program at Wesley Woods, please contact Ed Lawrence at (404) 728-6975.

THE FUQUA CENTER *welcomes* NEW STAFF MEMBERS:

Nicholle Davis, MA
Medical Assistant

Sherry Dey, MS, RN, CS
Clinical Nurse Specialist

Jane Gillespie, RN
Research Nurse

Patty Joy
Community Clinical Services Coordinator

Nicole Loveless
Research Project Coordinator

Sara Parker
Director of Development

Raymond Young, MD
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry

AS OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON CONSIDER prescription drug benefits for Medicare, seniors continue to make choices between paying for their medication and meeting other basic needs. Alternatives to the high prices of prescription medication are available. First, consider generic medications. They are less expensive but have about the same effect. Many antidepressants are offered as generics, like fluoxetine (Prozac®), mirtazapine (Remeron®)

and paroxetine (Paxil®). Talk to your doctor to see if generics are right for you. Second, most pharmaceutical companies have plans in which you can enroll for low- or no-cost medication. Forms for these programs are available on our website at <http://fuqua.emoryhealthcare.org>. A group called Georgia Cares (1-800-249-7468) will find the forms for you for a minimal charge.

Next, a word of caution about using Canadian pharmacies.

Our review of the online pricing for psychiatric medications found that the costs were often not much cheaper than Atlanta prices if you shop around. I recently had a patient tell me that she got her prescriptions filled in Canada and was surprised that the Nexium® she took was no longer a purple pill, but pink. When we looked it up, she was in fact taking a lower dose of Prilosec®. Not exactly what the doctor ordered! I urge you to consult with your doctor before buying from Canadian pharmacies.

William M. McDonald, M.D.

Director, Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression

Treatment Options

AN IMBALANCE OF NEUROTRANSMITTERS IN THE BRAIN IS THOUGHT TO BE ONE CAUSE OF MAJOR DEPRESSION. Neurotransmitters are chemical messengers that carry impulses from one neuron to the next. When these messengers are disrupted, one can experience symptoms of depression like feeling tired, loss of appetite, and trouble sleeping or concentrating. The most important neurotransmitters in depression are serotonin (SER), dopamine (DA), and norepinephrine (NE). Here we discuss newer medications that affect not only SER but also DA and NE.

Wellbutrin® (bupropion) is the oldest of these “newer” medications. The exact way Wellbutrin works is unclear although it has relatively weak effects on NE and DA reuptake. Its side effects are similar to SSRIs (occasional nausea, insomnia, etc.) without affecting sexual function.

Effexor® (venlafaxine) is the first antidepressant to affect both SER and NE. It is a serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor (SNRI). There is evidence that SNRIs are more effective than SSRIs (perhaps because they increase SER and NE neurotransmission), but more comparisons are needed. Side effects of Effexor are similar to SSRIs

at low doses. At higher doses, side effects may be occasional sweating and tremor. SNRIs are usually well tolerated. The FDA recently approved the newest SNRI, Cymbalta® (duoxetine), but it is not yet available for sale.

Remeron® (mirtazapine) also works by increasing SER and NE in the brain. Side effects can be weight gain and sedation. Of course these “side effects” can be beneficial in, for example, a patient who has lost a lot of weight from cancer.

Antidepressants fall into different classes depending on how they affect neurotransmitters. To improve your response from antidepressants, one might consider trying one from a different class (like SSRI vs. SNRI). For more information, please visit us online at: <http://fuqua.emoryhealthcare.org>.



Fuqua Update

The Year in Review

- 50% of the 603 new patients in 2003 entered the system via our onsite services in metro Atlanta nursing homes, assisted living and retirement communities.
- Over 100 patients enrolled in ongoing research studies.
- Twelve on-site clinical services and two support groups are now provided in metro Atlanta retirement communities.
- An average of eight trainings per month are provided for primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, medical and nursing students, assisted living personnel, and the faith-based community.
- An average of three courses per year in ECT are provided for psychiatrists and their support staff.
- Forty-three individuals were screened by Fuqua Center staff and volunteers at the Budd Terrace National Depression Screening Day site.
- The Mental Health & Aging Policy Committee was assembled for political advocacy at the state and national level.

What the Future Holds

Plans are underway at the Fuqua Center to establish a National Depression Information Service, modeled after the National Cancer Information Service. The Service will provide unbiased summaries of scientific literature for lay persons and health care professionals regarding the treatment of depression in all ages. The service will also link patients seeking help to a local mental health clinician.

Retired chairman of Atlanta-based CNN, Tom Johnson, who went public with his struggle with depression last year, is leading our fund raising efforts with a \$100,000 gift to the National Depression Information Service project in honor of Mr. J.B. Fuqua.

Another project addresses the stigma of depression in the workplace and the resulting lower health insurance coverage for mental illness. Educating CEOs that depression is a biological illness, and that adequate treatment is key to eliminating the stigma and changing the disparity in health insurance coverage.



Join the "Friends of the Fuqua Center"

The Fuqua Center is a non-profit organization that relies on private support from our friends in the community to sustain its comprehensive programs and services. We need your support to continue improving access to treatment for depression, and improving public awareness and understanding of depression in older adults. Your gift will help solidify the Center's presence far into the future as a resource for patients, their caregivers, and healthcare providers.

For more information on making a tax-deductible gift to the Fuqua Center call: Sara Parker, Director of Development, (404) 728-6309. Or, use the attached envelope to mail your gift today!

Fuqua Continues Support

ATLANTA BUSINESSMAN AND PHILANTHROPIST J.B. FUQUA RECENTLY PLEDGED AN ADDITIONAL \$2 MILLION to endow the J.B. Fuqua Chair in Late-Life Depression in the Emory University School of Medicine.

Dr. William M. McDonald, MD, Director of the Fuqua Center and an Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, will serve as the initial chair. "We are in the middle of a revolution in the way we deal with depression," says Dr. McDonald, "and Mr. Fuqua has been critically important in arming us with the tools we need."

The endowment is intended to support physicians who are working in the field of late-life depression and who are able to help move scientific discoveries from the laboratory to the bedside for the benefit of patients.

WAYS TO GIVE

- ◆ Gifts of Cash
- ◆ Gifts of Securities
- ◆ Gifts of Real Estate

PLANNED GIFTS

- ◆ Bequests
- ◆ Charitable Remainder Trusts
- ◆ Charitable Lead Trusts
- ◆ Gifts Through Retirement Plans
- ◆ Charitable Gift Annuities

CONGRATULATIONS

to Keith Wood, PhD, Fuqua Center Advisory Committee member, on his promotion to Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences in the Emory University School of Medicine!

Community

Clinical Services

The Fuqua Center comes to you...

The Fuqua Center provides services in independent/assisted living facilities and nursing homes to help identify and treat residents with mental health conditions. These services are provided by an advanced practice nurse with special training in the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders in older adults. This nurse works closely with a geriatric psychiatrist and other healthcare workers to effectively treat the resident.

The services offered include screening for depression and dementia, referral for appropriate treatment, and follow-up. Follow-up may include psychiatric and physical examinations, medication management, and staff and family education on how to best interact and care for residents. Educational programs are also provided for residents, staff, and families on topics related to aging, quality of life, depression, and dementia.

For more information, please call Patty Joy, Community Clinical Services Coordinator, at (404) 728-6302.

Education

Referral Network

Referral Network member Rev. Mari Lane Brooks has found a way to successfully combine faith and mental health issues as the Director of Haven of Hope Counseling Center in Sugar Hill, Georgia. The mission of Haven of Hope is to provide quality Christ-centered counseling services to the Sugar Hill/Buford area. Rev. Brooks oversees 6 staff counselors that offer therapeutic services in anxiety, depression, stress management, pain management and more. Haven of Hope also offers community programs, healing prayer and support groups. For more information or appointments at Haven of Hope Counseling Center call (770) 945-2991. Find a Referral Network member or information about joining at <http://fuqua.emoryhealthcare.org>.

BE ON THE LOOK OUT for our E-Learning Center's new Fall/Winter Courses! Coming soon to www.lpgsites.com. Log on and register today!

COMMUNITY CLINICS

- Brighton Gardens of Buckhead
- Brighton Gardens of Dunwoody
- Edenbrook Buckhead
- Huntcliff Sunrise
- Huntcliff Summit
- King's Bridge Retirement Center
- Merrill Gardens Dunwoody
- Sunrise at Buckhead
- Sunrise of Decatur
- Sunrise of Dunwoody
- Waterford Gardens
- Wesley Woods Towers

EMORY HEALTHCARE

Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression

Wesley Woods Health Center, 4th Floor
1841 Clifton Rd., NE
Atlanta, GA 30329



Facts about depression
Treatment options
How to learn more

