

Depression among Older Adults

Depression in the elderly is a widespread problem that is often not diagnosed and frequently undertreated. Late-life depression affects about 6 million Americans age 65 and older – but only 10% receive treatment. The risk of depression increases with other illnesses and when ability to function becomes limited. Depressive disorder is not a normal part of aging. In other words, elderly depression is more closely linked to health than it is to age.

Depression tends to last longer in elderly adults. It doubles the risk of cardiac diseases and increases the risk of death from illness. Depression also reduces the ability to rehabilitate. The National Institute of Mental Health considers depression in people age 65 and older to be a major public health problem.

Some ways to combat and prevent depression include:

- Getting out into the world
- Connecting to others
- Participating in enjoyable activities
- Volunteering
- Taking care of a pet
- Learning a new skill
- Enjoying jokes and stories
- Maintaining a healthy diet
- Exercising

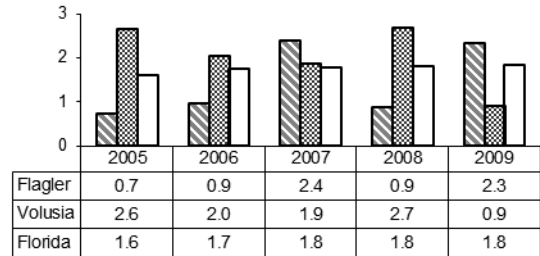
County BRFSS Data Report

The 2007 Florida Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Data Report contains responses from randomly selected participants on health-related questions. Selected BRFSS responses for experiences among adults aged 65 and older are shown below as percents.

| 2007 – 65 & older | Flagler | Volusia | Florida |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Diagnosed with arthritis | 45.9 % | 43.3 % | 47.6 % |
| Some form of heart disease | 20.2 | 16.3 | 23.9 |
| Ever had a stroke | 5.0 | 4.9 | 7.9 |
| Diagnosed high cholesterol | 56.8 | 52.4 | 49.8 |
| Diagnosed diabetes | 14.5 | 16.1 | 18.5 |
| Good/Excellent Overall Health | 85.9 | 77.1 | 75.2 |
| Satisfied with their life | 92.7 | 95.7 | 95.8 |
| Receive social/emotional support | 84.5 | 74.4 | 77.4 |
| Good physical health | 90.2 | 87.1 | 84.3 |
| Good mental health | 94.4 | 94.5 | 94.5 |
| Diagnosed High Blood Pressure | 54.3 | 56.4 | 53.5 |
| Received a flu shot last year | 69.4 | 69.9 | 64.6 |
| Received pneumonia vaccination | 69.4 | 63.4 | 63.0 |
| Overweight or obese | 60.8 | 60.0 | 61.2 |
| Eat five fruits/vegetables per day | 33.5 | 31.1 | 28.3 |
| Do moderate physical activity | 36.5 | 30.2 | 32.5 |
| Former smokers | 49.9 | 48.8 | 46.5 |

Elder Suicide

Rate of Suicide, Ages 60+, Per 10,000 Population



■ Flagler ■ Volusia □ Florida

This Indicator Measures...the rate of suicide for ages 60 older, per 10,000 population in Flagler and Volusia Counties.

This is Important Because...according to the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, suicide disproportionately impacts the elderly.

Source: Florida CHARTS

Note: The fluctuations in the Flagler rate are likely due to the relatively small incidence of suicide. The Volusia rate has fluctuated but saw a significant decrease in 2009.

Substance Abuse among Older Adults

According to a recent report, need for substance abuse treatment among Americans over age 50 is projected to double by 2020. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reports that the aging of the baby boom generation is resulting in a dramatic increase in illicit drug use among adults 50 and over.

- There is a need for prevention at all ages
- Age-related physiological and social changes make older adults more vulnerable to the harmful effects of illicit drugs
- Data shows that 4.7% used an illicit drug in the past year
- Marijuana use was more common than nonmedical use of prescription drugs for adults age 50 to 59
- Nonmedical use of prescription drugs was more common than marijuana for adults aged 65 and older.

Source: The NSDUH Report published by the Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)