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Impact of Social Activities on Healthy Aging in Community-Dwelling Adults

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Abstract

Humans are highly social beings which is evidenced by our desire to continually establish social relationships with each other. Healthy social relationships promote engagement in social activities and provide access to social support which greatly benefits overall health outcomes. In our research study, we provide an overview of the impact of social activities on the quality of life among nursing home residents (65+) and evaluate different aspects of social relationships on various health, physiological and psychological functioning. Evidence suggests that a level of social engagement increases life satisfaction and is also associated with a lower risk of physiological dysregulation while low levels of social engagement can negatively impact physiological and psychological functioning (Kelly et al., 2017). We utilize the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) survey to gather data from nursing home residents. The GDS is a tool developed as a self-report instrument utilized to screen for clinical depression among older adults (Mauk, 2018). Data collected from the surveys will be analyzed using t-test data analysis. Independent variables of interest include participation in subjective measures of social activities, social programs, and social support. The primary outcome of interest is to determine the impact of social activities on cognitive functioning, quality of life, and the number of hospitalizations. Creating programs that help older adults engage in activities and boost productivity, such as social activities, group exercise, group volunteering, etc., will contribute to a better life satisfaction and healthier aging.

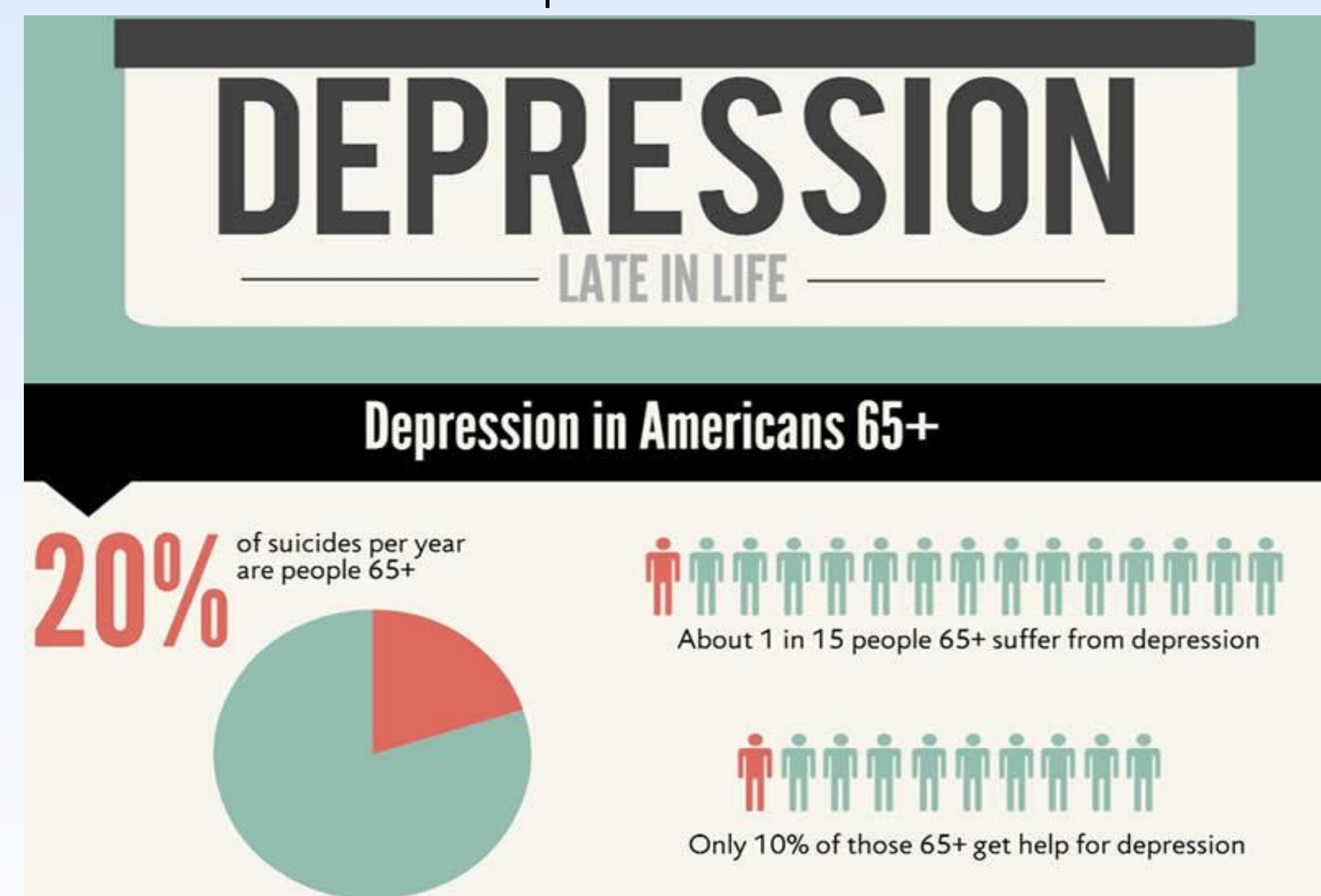
Background and Significance

- Activity Theory suggests increased or maintained activity levels are imperative for healthy aging
 - Social integration has a profound effect on mental and physical health outcomes.
 - Social isolation is proven to be significantly related to lower health status and quality of life.
- Older adults are a growing population
 - Active Nursing Homes in the US: 15,600
 - Number of Residences in the US: 1.4 million (CDC, 2014)
- Older adult population demands more from society
- Depression in geriatric populations is a growing concern
 - Approx. 40% of US nursing home residents admit to depression (American Geriatric Association)



Methods

- Sample population from an affordable housing nursing home
 - Will be aware of participation in study
- Residents will be asked to participate
- Residents eligible for this study:
 - 65 years old or older
 - Not diagnosed with moderate to severe dementia
 - Able to respond to questions
- Groups divided based on:
 - Current behaviors
 - Participation in group activities
- Survey given twice:
 - Before the intervention
 - End of the study
- Survey information:
 - Provide subjective and objective data
 - Both types of data collection in ratio form
 - Number of hospitalizations
 - Geriatric Depression Scale
 - 15 or 30 general question survey
 - Assess depression in older adults



Data Analysis Methods

- Use t-test to compare data
 - T-test used to compare means of the groups
 - The first test will be to determine if there is a significant change in the pretests and posttests
 - Second test to find significance between control and variable groups

Interprofessional Roles and Responsibilities

- Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development
 - Adults (65+) - Final stage of integrity vs. despair.
 - Period of life reflection and purpose
- Provider Interventions
 - Implementation of Narrative Therapy
 - Promotes client exposure
 - Highlights meaningful aspects vs non-relevance
- Integrated care team
 - Providers
 - Identifies depression and root cause
 - Provides proper referral
 - Counselors
 - Focus on behavioral aspects
 - Create groups to promote socialization
 - Promotes self efficacy through:
 - Support groups
 - Group counseling
 - Nurses
 - Aid in participation
 - Make groups accessible based on needs
 - Resource Provider Roles
 - Provide accessible & reasonable social activity interventions as evidenced by research
 - Normalize feelings & encourage clients to increase social activities
- Cultural Considerations
 - Can affect participation
 - Address cultural concerns
 - Helps encourage participation



Discussion

- Depression - growing issue in the older adult population
- Participation in group activities influences level of well-being
 - Higher group participation, higher levels of well-being
- Group activities provide older adults with
 - Benefits that can increase well-being
 - Social interaction
 - Sense of community
 - Cognitive engagement
- Measuring life satisfaction
 - Geriatric Depression Scale
- Population of older adults in the US
 - Will almost double in the next thirty years (Mauk, 2018)
 - Causing a significant increase in nursing home residents
- Importance of staying active as you get older
 - Be healthier and happier
 - Incur less health-care relate
 - Contribute more to the community

Conclusion

- Social isolation** increases the risk for depression
 - Individuals unable to express feelings
 - Decreases self identity as a contributing member of society
 - Increases the risk for comorbidity
 - Decreases mood, mobility and energy levels
- With increased social engagement, we hope to see an increase in healthy and satisfying life longevity amongst nursing home residents
 - Quality of Life measurements observed:
 - Decrease hospitalizations related to depression
 - Self-care maintenance
 - Decrease cognitive decline
 - Increase energy
 - Decrease periods of social isolation

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