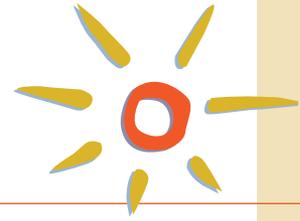


# In the Mood



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

Volume 7, Issue 1  
Spring 2008

## Evidence Based Medicine: Clinical Decision Making in the 21st Century

EVERY YEAR, THOUSANDS OF RESEARCH STUDIES ARE CONDUCTED on treatments for pretty much any medical condition. Thirty years ago, this information was less accessible. Now, physicians can quickly and efficiently consult with the latest published research to make decisions about patient care. With the growth of the internet and resources such as PubMed, physicians have access to an ever-expanding archive of critical research information on almost every illness imaginable.

The accessibility of research literature has significantly enhanced the capability of physicians to practice evidence-based medicine. Evidence based medicine is the fusion of scientific research, clinical experience, and patient values into medical decision making. In the past, physicians based clinical decisions on a combination of what they learned in medical school and residency, their clinical experience, and the knowledge of their peers.

Now, in a matter of minutes, physicians can access the latest developments from clinical research in order to make clinical decisions based on the best and current evidence. *(cont'd inside)*



## Locating Health Information Online

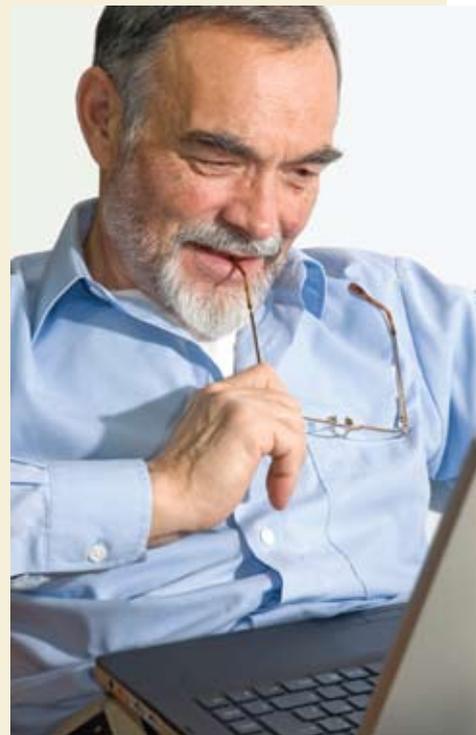
We are inundated with more health information than ever before. From television commercials to the web, information on just about any health topic can be located in a matter of minutes.

More and more Fuqua Center clinicians treat well-informed patients who have researched treatments prior to their visit. Many patients and caregivers find information online. So much of what is online is unregulated and unsupported by scientific research. Here are a few general tips on reading health information online:

**Always maintain a critical eye.** Look for who wrote, created, and/or sponsored the advertisement, website, magazine article, etc. Be particularly wary of information from commercial entities such as pharmaceutical or other companies who may be advertising their products.

**Look for information that is based on clinical studies.** Separate out sites that are based on clinical research evidence from sites that are not. Depend more on sites that not only rely on evidence but that clearly reference the evidence they are using as a source of information.

**Do not base your conclusions on just one source.** Rely more on sites that clearly cite published scientific research as a source of information.



Online resources for health information are powerful tools for seniors

SEE INSIDE  
FOR A LIST OF  
OUR FAVORITE  
HEALTH  
INFORMATION  
WEBSITES

(continued from page 1: Evidence Based Medicine)

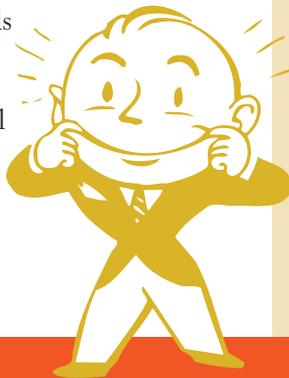
The biggest perceived barrier to evidence-based practice is time; clinicians must often make decisions quickly. Medical schools have begun to address this by teaching physicians efficient processes for acquiring, appraising and applying research. Here's how it works.

Clinicians begin by comprehensively assessing the patient situation using all the fundamental tenets of the practice of medicine. The clinician then formulates the question in a way that will yield results from an online journal database. There are many internet and print-based resources the clinician can then use to acquire the appropriate evidence to support a clinical decision. Once he/she finds an appropriate article, the clinician must carefully assess the article to make sure the research presented is appropriate for the patient situation and methodologically sound.

**Clinicians at the Fuqua Center consistently utilize the most up to date research information available to guide their decisions.**

Finally, the clinician must decide how to apply this research. The clinician should pay particular attention to the patients' preferences and values when making a final decision.

At the Fuqua Center, we are incorporating evidence-based medicine in to all areas of practice. Clinicians at the Fuqua Center consistently utilize the most up to date research information available to guide their decisions. In the future, we plan to create a web-page devoted to evidence-based geriatric psychiatry information so that mental health professionals and the general public alike can stay up to date on the latest in evidence-based mental health care.



## Who to call



To reach the Fuqua Center, please call (404) 728-6302 or 1-877-498-0096 for general information.

For new patient appointments, call (404) 728-6362.

For telemedicine appointments, call 1-866-754-4325.

For community clinical sites, call (404) 728-6382.

For information on community education or training, call Nancie Vito at (404) 728-4558.

For information on our support group and the peer support program call Andrew Katz at (404) 728-6948.

For opportunities to participate in research studies, call Sinead Quinn at (404) 728-6957.

For information about Transitions Senior Program, a day treatment program, contact Ed Lawrence at (404) 728-4776.

To be added to our newsletter mailing list, call 404-728-6279 or email your name and address to fuqua-center@emory.edu

## Recommended Health Information Websites

Here are some good websites that provide information on a broad range of health topics including mental health.

**For evidence-based information on a variety of health topics:**

[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)  
Medline Plus (free)

<http://clinicalevidence.bmj.com/ceweb/index.jsp>  
BMJ Clinical Evidence  
(abstracts free; subscription for full access)

[www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)  
Web MD (free)  
([www.emedicine.com](http://www.emedicine.com) and [www.medscape.com](http://www.medscape.com) are excellent affiliated sites)

**For information on mental health and aging:**

[www.aagponline.org](http://www.aagponline.org)  
American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry

[www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov)  
The Administration on Aging (AoA)

[www.nimh.gov](http://www.nimh.gov)  
National Institute of Mental Health

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)  
American Psychiatric Association (APA)

[www.asaging.org](http://www.asaging.org)  
American Society on Aging (ASA)

**BOOKMARK OUR WEBSITE:**

<http://www.emoryhealthcare.org/departments/fuqua/>



## Collaboration with GAHSA Improves Mental Healthcare for Older Georgians

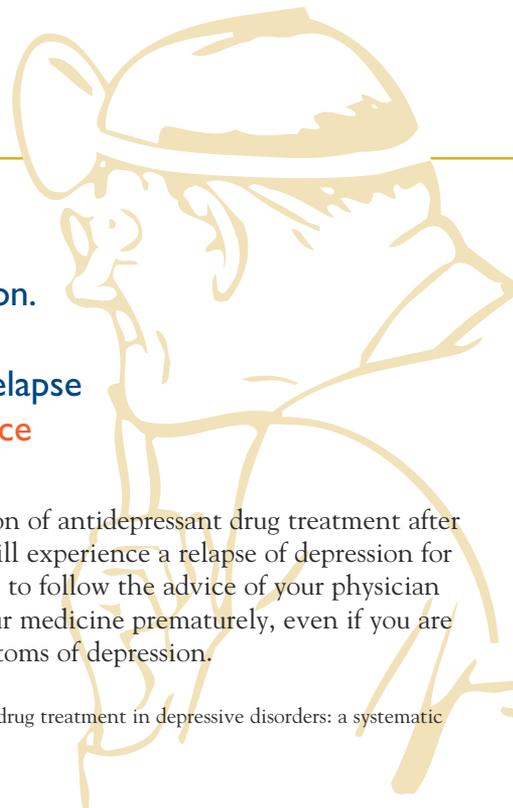
The Fuqua Center received funding in May 2007 in order to solidify a partnership with GAHSA, the Georgia Association for Homes and Services for the Aging. The Georgia Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (GAHSA) is a nonprofit association that represents non-profit and other quality-focused community-based housing and service providers for older Georgians.

The Fuqua Center has trained service coordinators (social workers) who work in 16 different independent and assisted living facilities to recognize depressive symptoms and screen for depression. Five face-to-face trainings were held from May through September. Additionally, Fuqua Center staff will hold monthly case conferences (teleconferences) through April 2008. Barriers to the residents receiving needed psychiatric care are being addressed through this collaborative effort in the 16 participating housing communities.

## Fuqua Center for Late Life Depression Receives 2007 Business and Aging Award

In November, the Metropolitan Partnership in Aging and the Atlanta Regional Commission presented Eve Byrd and Nancie Vito of the Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression with a 2007 Business and Aging Award. These awards recognize public-private partnerships that help improve the quality of life for older adults in the region. This award was given in recognition of the Fuqua Center's work with Georgia Department of Human Resources Division of Aging Services to provide training on depression for Community Care Support Provider care managers statewide.

Delmar Gardens of Gwinnett and Georgia Natural Gas were also honored for their efforts to improve the lives of older adults in the Atlanta-area.



## Ask the Doctor

Depression affects roughly 10% of the population. Many individuals recover and never experience another episode. However, some individuals relapse after recovery. **What treatments actually reduce the risk of relapse?**

According to the latest research, the continuing prescription of antidepressant drug treatment after recovery significantly reduces the proportion of people who will experience a relapse of depression for one to three years following the initial episode. It is always best to follow the advice of your physician when taking antidepressant medication. If you stop taking your medicine prematurely, even if you are feeling better, you may increase the risk of experiencing symptoms of depression.

Geddes JG, Carney SM, Davies C, et al. Relapse prevention with antidepressant drug treatment in depressive disorders: a systematic review. *Lancet* 2003; 361:653-661.

### SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

☹  
Feeling sad or numb

☹  
Crying easily or for no reason

☹  
No interest or pleasure in things you used to enjoy

☹  
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



# Research Participation Opportunities

For more information on any of the research opportunities listed, please contact Sinéad Quinn at (404) 728-6957

The Department of Psychiatry at Wesley Woods is now enrolling patients for an ongoing research study using a non-invasive, non-medication treatment for depression (transcranial magnetic stimulation [TMS]). To be included, patients should have major depression that has not responded to antidepressant medications, be 21-70 years old, be willing to discontinue current antidepressant medications and have no other major medical or psychiatric illness. Participation is free and responders to TMS treatment will be eligible to receive free medications during a 6-month follow-up study.

The Department of Psychiatry at Wesley Woods is partnering with researchers at Duke University and the University of Mississippi to study the link between structural and biological causes of depression. Interested subjects must

have no major psychiatric disorder, past or present, other than depression and must agree to have an autopsy upon death.

The Department of Psychiatry at Wesley Woods is conducting a study using Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to study Major Depression in older adults. We need volunteers with and without depression who are at least 60 years old, currently experiencing an episode of depression or have no history of depression, no other major mental illness, generally healthy (OK to have medical conditions that are under control), no history of neurological disease (such as Parkinson Disease, dementia, epilepsy or stroke) and are willing to have an MRI scan of the head. Participants will receive up to \$100 to compensate for their time participating in the study.

## EMORY HEALTHCARE

### Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression

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

<http://www.emoryhealthcare.org/departments/fuqua/>

Treatment options  
How to learn more  
Facts about depression

