



Special Exercise Edition Moving Improves Mood

There is a growing body of evidence to support the use of exercise as a strategy to manage depression, with many supporting randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and cross sectional trials being reported.

In 2008 the **Cochrane Collaboration** published a review of 28 RCTs examining exercise for depression (Mead et al, 2008)*.

Summary:

- Regular exercise of moderate intensity (either aerobic exercise or resistance training) can significantly reduce symptoms of depression

amongst adults with depression of mild to moderate severity.

- Regular exercise can be used as an adjunct to antidepressant treatment.

- A regular exercise program can be an effective stand-alone treatment (monotherapy) for adults with mild to moderate depression who were previously sedentary (exercising infrequently).

- For sedentary older adults with mild to moderate depression, a 16-week exercise program is equally effective as an SSRI antidepressant.

- Exercise should not be used

as a stand-alone treatment (monotherapy) for severe depression, melancholic depression or bipolar disorder.

This edition of the GP newsletter focuses on exercise as a treatment for depression, with an introduction to key resources that we hope you will be able to use to get your depressed patients on the move!

**Mead GE. et al. Exercise for depression. [Review] [177 refs] [Journal Article. Meta-Analysis. Review] Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. (4):CD004366, 2008.*



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Latest Research: BDI Exercise and Mood Study

While there is a growing body of evidence to support the use of exercise as a strategy to manage depression, it is well known that people experiencing depression are less physically active than those who are not.



The Black Dog Institute conducted an **“Exercise and Mood”** survey at the 2008 Blackmores Sydney Running Festival to further investigate the relationships between exercise, mood and symptoms of depression. Entrants in the event were asked to complete brief questionnaires immediately before and after their running

events, to examine changes in mood after exercise. Over 500 entrants were surveyed on the day, and over 100 completed a follow-up on-line survey two months later.

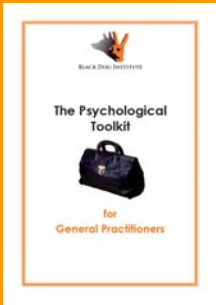
The **Exercise and Mood Study** found that people experiencing mild symptoms of depression were equally as likely to have a significant lift in mood after a run as those without depression. **Entrants (both with and without depressive symptoms) reported being significantly happier, more relaxed, peaceful and ‘upbeat’ after a run, and significantly less anxious.**

However, despite these mood benefits of running, people experiencing mild symptoms of depression in the study reported more obstacles to exercise. While the most common barrier overall was lack of time, people with

current symptoms of depression were more likely to report that ‘not feeling in the mood’, feeling self-conscious, expecting to feel pain or to feel uncomfortable during exercise, an injury or disability or financial cost had prevented them from exercising during the past month.

Even mild symptoms of depression were associated with less involvement in strenuous exercise, reduced fitness, a lower body image and lower ‘self-efficacy’ or confidence in exercising.

The results of the **Exercise and Mood Study** were used to inform the development of the upcoming ‘Exercise the Mood: Exercise as a Treatment for Depression’ training program, to assist health professionals in supporting depressed patients to overcome obstacles to exercise.



Download copies of the Psychological Toolkit from our website.

The Psychological Toolkit:

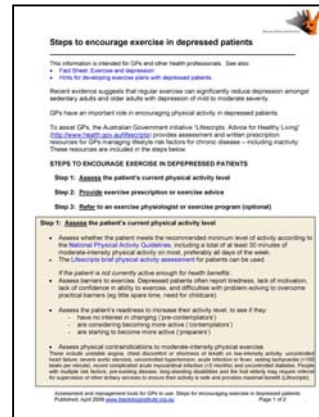
New Exercise Resources

Regular exercise is increasingly gaining recognition as an evidence-based strategy to assist the management of mood disorders.

However, it can be very difficult for people experiencing depression to find the motivation to start becoming more active. GPs can play an important role in encouraging physical activity in depressed patients.

The Psychological Toolkit now includes resources for GPs to use when assisting depressed patients to increase their exercise, including patient handouts.

Two new resources for GPs outline steps to encourage exercise in depressed patients, including developing exercise plans and writing exercise Prescriptions and a comprehensive resource list



Four new handouts can assist patients to get active, through setting weekly exercise plans, recording daily activities, addressing obstacles to exercise and keeping up motivation.



All these resources can be downloaded from the Black Dog Institute website.

Energising New Program

“Exercise the Mood: Exercise as a Treatment for Depression”



An exciting new training program for GPs, psychologists and other health professionals, **‘Exercise the Mood: Exercise as a Treatment for Depression’**, will commence in August 2009. A media launch for the program will be held at the Black Dog Institute on 15th April 2009 to raise awareness of the mental health benefits of exercise.

The 2-hour workshop will aim to assist health professionals in using an often neglected strategy to manage depression – exercise. Topics include current evidence for the role of exercise in treating depression, development of individualised exercise

plans for depressed patients, strategies to increase motivation to exercise, and Medicare rebates available for exercise physiology consultations. The program was developed in collaboration with the UNSW Lifestyle Clinic and is informed by recent evidence for exercise in managing depression, including our 2008 “Exercise and Mood Study”.



In 2009, the Exercise as a Treatment for Depression

program will be held, free-of charge, at the Black Dog Institute on the following dates at 6.30pm:

Wednesday 29th July
Wednesday 30th September
Wednesday 25th November

The program will be implemented throughout NSW from 2010.

To register for the program, see our website www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

For more information on the program or if you would like a workshop run in your area, please contact our GP Project Officer Katie Denton on 02 9382 8518 or email on k.denton@blackdog.org.au.

New "ABC of CBT" Program Launched

In February and March this year an exciting new program was launched at the Institute. Twenty five GPs completed this three-day, 20-hr training in CBT strategies to manage patients with negative thinking, anxiety, worry, panic and anger- all problems common in non-melancholic depression.

The course was written and delivered by clinical psychologist Dr Sarah Edelman and GP Dr Sarah Weaver and was rated a great success. Those who have completed the program are now eligible to register for FPS accreditation (previously level 2) with GPMHSC and claim corresponding rebates for delivering FPS to their patients.

We have already scheduled three further courses in 2009 – in Canberra in June (contact ACT DGP to enquire about registering), in Kogarah in August and at the Institute in Randwick in September. Check our website for further details and registration.

Course Dates

Date:	Program:	Location:
Saturday, 2 May	Demystifying Depression	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Wednesday, 6 May	Ups & Downs (Bipolar Disorder) Part 1	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Wednesday, 13 May	Ups & Downs (Bipolar Disorder) Part 2	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Saturday, 16 May	Ups & Downs (Bipolar Disorder)	Canberra, ACT
Saturday, 30 May	Troubled Teens	Dee Why, NSW
Saturday, 13 June	Troubled Teens	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Saturday, 13 June	The ABC of CBT (Part 1)	Canberra, ACT
Saturday, 20 June	The ABC of CBT (Part 2)	Canberra, ACT
Sunday, 21 June	The ABC of CBT (Part 3)	Canberra, ACT
Saturday, 27 June	Ups & Downs (Bipolar Disorder)	Coffs Harbour, NSW
Saturday, 27 June	Dealing with Difficult Consultations	Coffs Harbour, NSW
Saturday, 4 July	Psychological Treatments	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Saturday, 4 July	Psychological Toolkit	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Wednesday, 29 July	Exercise the Mood	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Saturday 8 August	Ups & Downs (Bipolar Disorder)	Black Dog Institute, NSW
Saturday, 8 August	The ABC of CBT (Part 1)	Kogarah, NSW
Saturday, 22 August	The ABC of CBT (Part 2)	Kogarah, NSW
Saturday, 29 August	The ABC of CBT (Part 3)	Kogarah, NSW

To register for a program please visit our website: blackdoginstitute.org.au

or email Katie at k.denton@blackdog.org.au

For off-site programs please contact the relevant Division (contact details are on our website).

See our
website for
course updates!



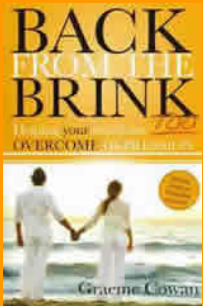
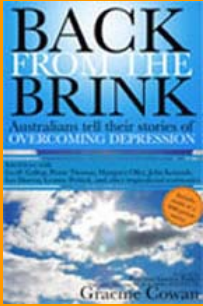
Come and
visit our
stand at
the
Sydney
GPCE on
22nd,
23rd and
24th May

New Fact Sheets

As mentioned in previous newsletters, the Black Dog Institute has a series of fact sheets providing information on all aspects of mood disorders and their management for consumers, carers and health professionals. These are readily available on the website, and also in the *Psychological Toolkit*.

The two most recently added fact sheets provide information on supplementary strategies for managing depression - **Exercise and Depression** and **Omega-3 and Mood Disorders**.





Book Review

Back from the Brink: Australians tell their stories of overcoming depression
Graeme Cowan

“These first hand accounts showing how people have overcome depression are sorely needed. To read about how others have tried various strategies that have ultimately led to recovery, gives hope and inspiration.”

Ms Dawn Smith
CEO, Lifeline Australia

Compiled by Graeme Cowan, this book details discussions with well-known and everyday Australians who share their personal journey of enduring and overcoming depression.

Written in a question and answer format, the book offers insights into the experiences endured by those with depression, and a range of specific, practical and effective strategies that have helped people manage or overcome depression. The questions in

Cowan's interviews were formed by asking real depression sufferers what they wanted to see asked.

These firsthand accounts provide both inspiration and practical information for people suffering depression and their supporting family members and friends. The book is also a valuable resource for clinicians seeking a deeper understanding of mood disorders from a 'patient's eye view'.

In addition to the personal stories, Back from the Brink outlines the results of two surveys examining treatments for depression. A brief summary of treatments available and relevant lifestyle factors is provided. The Black Dog Institute assisted in providing survey data.

One theme emerging from both the personal stories and survey results is the role of exercise in managing depression.

Exercise was rated as the first and second most helpful strategy in the two surveys cited in the book.

As Cowan states, **“The message is clear: start moving”**.

Recently a second volume **‘Back from the Brink Too’** has been published. Subtitled “Helping your loved one overcome depression” it offers a step-by-step approach for carers in how to support a loved one in their journey through depression while supporting themselves along the way. It includes first hand experiences, and also a comprehensive resource list. Both books were launched at the Black Dog Institute.

To purchase these books:

Visit Graeme's website www.iambackfromthebrink.com and from major bookstores (stocked by both Dymocks and Angus & Robertson)

Medicare Item for Exercise Physiologists

Exercise physiologists are tertiary qualified allied health professionals specialising in the delivery of exercise, lifestyle and behavioural modification programs for the prevention and management of chronic diseases, including depression, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and osteoporosis.

As reported earlier in this newsletter, recent evidence supports the use of regular exercise for reducing depression in sedentary and older adults. GPs may wish to refer depressed patients to exercise physiologists to safely assess, prescribe and implement exercise programs. This may be particularly useful for depressed patients with complex needs, such as the elderly, those with chronic pain or medical conditions.

Since 2006, exercise physiologists are included amongst the allied health professionals able to provide Medicare services to people with chronic and complex illnesses. **Patients being managed by a GP under the EPC Items 721 (GP Management Plan) and 723 (Team Care Arrangement) are eligible for rebates for up to five sessions per year with an allied health professional, including an AAESS accredited exercise physiologist.**

For a directory of exercise physiologists see the website of the Australian Association of Exercise Sports Science (AAESS): <http://www.aaess.com.au>.

About us:

The Black Dog Institute is an educational, research, clinical and community-oriented facility offering specialist expertise in mood disorders - a range of disorders that include depression and bipolar disorder. The Institute is located at the Prince of Wales Hospital and affiliated with the University of New South Wales. The Institute is supported by NSW Health.

Black Dog Institute, Hospital Road, Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick NSW 2031



All future editions of our GP newsletter will be delivered electronically. If you would like to receive our newsletter, please sign up via our website. Missed a newsletter? Previous editions are available online on our website