
Abstract 30

Vascular Depression Impairs Health-Related Behavior

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This study investigated the relationship between subclinical depression and health behaviors in 100 African Americans (72% of whom were women) with a mean age of 72 years and education of 12 years. Depressive symptoms were significantly related

to life stress, vascular burden, sleep quality, exercise, and dietary behavior patterns. Both life events and vascular burden predicted subclinical depression. Age and life events predicted exercise. Life events and education predicted diet. The effect of life events on diet, exercise, and sleep was partially mediated by depressive symptoms. The effect of vascular burden on diet, exercise, and sleep was partially mediated by depressive symptoms. Health promotion efforts may do well to incorporate stress management, depression assessment and intervention, and chronic disease management into their programs.