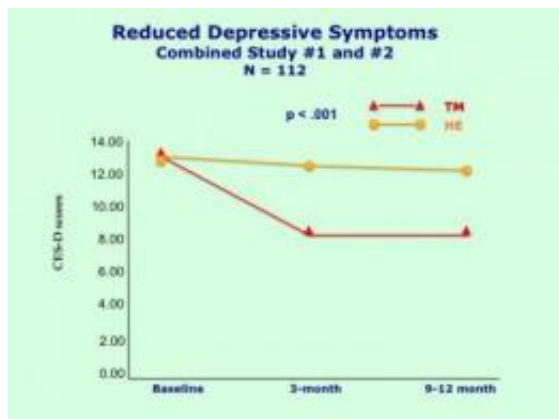


New studies show reduced depression with Transcendental Meditation

7 April 2010



This graph shows the reduced symptoms of depression through Transcendental Meditation in older adults at risk for CVD. Combined Study #1 and #2. N=112. Credit: Maharishi University of Management

The Transcendental Meditation technique may be an effective approach to reduce symptoms of depression, according to two new studies to be presented at the 31st Annual Meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine in Seattle, Washington April 9th, 2010.

The studies, conducted at Charles Drew University in Los Angeles and University of Hawaii in Kohala included African Americans and Native Hawaiians, 55 years and older, who were at risk for cardiovascular disease. Participants were randomly allocated to the Transcendental Meditation program or health education control group, and assessed with a standard test for depression—the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D) inventory over 9-12 months.

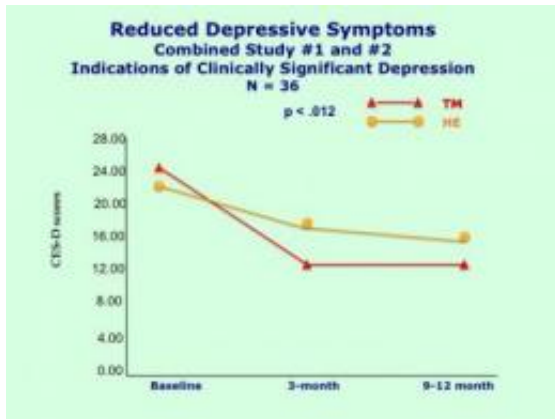
"Clinically meaningful reductions in depressive symptoms were associated with practice of the Transcendental Meditation program," said Sanford Nidich, EdD, lead author and senior researcher at the Institute for Natural Medicine and Prevention at

Maharishi University of Management. "The findings of these studies have important implications for improving mental health and reducing the risk of cardiovascular morbidity and mortality," said Dr. Nidich.

Participants in both studies who practiced the Transcendental Meditation program showed significant reductions in depressive symptoms compared to health education controls. The largest decreases were found in those participants who had indications of clinically significant depression, with those practicing Transcendental Meditation showing an average reduction in depressive symptoms of 48%.

"These results are encouraging and provide support for testing the efficacy of Transcendental Meditation as a therapeutic adjunct in the treatment of [clinical depression](#)," said Hector Myers, PhD, study co-author and professor and director of Clinical Training in the Department of Psychology at U.C.L.A.

The results of these studies are timely. For older Americans, depression is a particularly debilitating disease, with approximately 20% suffering from some form of depression. Overall, 18 million men and women suffer from depression in the United States. Depression is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, with even a moderate level of depressive symptoms associated with increased cardiac events.



This graph shows the reduced symptoms of depression through Transcendental Meditation in older adults with indications of clinically significant depression. Combined Study #1 and #2. N=36. Credit: Maharishi University of Management

"The clinically significant reductions in depression without drugs or psychotherapy in these studies suggest the Transcendental Meditation program may improve mental and associated physical health in older high risk subjects," said Robert Schneider MD FACC, director of MUM's Institute for Natural Medicine and Prevention.

"The importance of reducing depression in the elderly at risk for heart disease cannot be overestimated," said Gary P. Kaplan MD PhD, Clinical Associate Professor of Neurology NYU School of Medicine. "Any technique not involving extra medication in this population is a welcome addition. I look forward to further research on the Transcendental Meditation technique and prevention of depression in other at-risk elderly populations, including those with stroke and other chronic diseases."

Facts on Study Design

•The first study was conducted in collaboration with Dr. Hector Myers at the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles. It included a subgroup of 59 African American men and women, 55 years and older, with a minimum carotid artery wall thickness of 0.65 for women and 0.72 for men.

•The second study was conducted in collaboration with Dr. Andrew Grandinetti at the University of Hawaii. Data was collected on 53 Native Hawaiian men in Kohala, Hawaii, 55 years and older, who had at least one additional major risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

•Measurements with the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression (CES-D) Rating Scale were taken at baseline, 3-month posttest, and 9-12 month posttest, comparing [Transcendental Meditation](#) to health education controls.

•Both African Americans and Native Hawaiians suffer from higher rates of cardiovascular disease compared to whites. African Americans have approximately 1.5 times the rate of cardiovascular morbidity and mortality and Native Hawaiians have 2 to 4 times the rate of cardiovascular disease compared to the whites.

Facts on Depression

•12.4 million women and 6.4 million men in the U.S. suffer from depression.

•Approximately 20% of the elderly suffers from some form of depression according the National Institutes of Health.

•Depression is an important risk factor for the development and progression of [cardiovascular disease](#) (CVD). Research has found that a dose-response effect exists whereby the level of depressive symptoms is linearly associated with the prevalence of cardiac events. Even a moderate level of [depressive symptoms](#) increases the risk for cardiac events.

•The Medical Outcomes Study determined that depression was more impairing in terms of patient functioning and well being than arthritis, diabetes mellitus, and hypertension, among others, and is more disruptive for social functioning than all of the chronic medical conditions.

•Research has shown that approximately 50% of patients suffering from major depression can be left undiagnosed by general practitioners.

- [Depression](#) accounts for \$83.1 billion in medical care and workplace costs.

Provided by Maharishi University of Management

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