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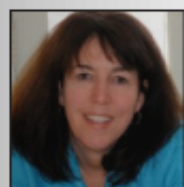
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WHAT'S NEW

Dr. Michael Brodsky examines the impact of former first Lady **Betty Ford** on addiction medicine. **6**



Do only **10.8% of psychiatrists** really see all of their patients for therapy? **Dr. Dinah Miller**

looks behind the numbers. **12**

Twenty minutes a day of **meditation or relaxation** eases depression in dementia caregivers. **13**



Depression Is a Top Alzheimer's Risk Factor

BY SHARON WORCESTER

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

PARIS – A 25% reduction in seven potentially modifiable lifestyle-based risk factors for Alzheimer's disease could lower the prevalence of Alzheimer's cases by 3 million worldwide, findings of a study presented at the conference show.

Just a 10% reduction in the factors could lower the prevalence of cases by 1 million, Deborah Barnes, Ph.D., reported at the conference, sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association. She and her colleagues calculated population attributable risks using data from recent systematic reviews and meta-analyses, and found that worldwide, low educational attainment was associated with the high-

est proportion (19%) of potentially attributable cases of Alzheimer's disease, followed by smoking (14%), physical inactivity (13%), depression (11%), midlife hypertension (5%), midlife obesity (2%), and diabetes (2%).

Among subjects in the United States, where the prevalence of some risk factors such as educational attainment differ from the worldwide prevalence, thus affecting the population attributable risks, physical inactivity had the highest associated proportion of potentially attributable cases of Alzheimer's disease (21%), followed by depression (15%), smoking (11%), midlife hypertension (8%), midlife obesity (7%), low educational attainment (7%), and diabetes (3%). The findings were published simultaneously in the *Lancet Neurology*

(*Lancet Neurol.* 2011 July 19 [doi:10.1016/S1474-4422(11)70072-2]).

The mathematical modeling used by Dr. Barnes and her colleagues for this study indicates that when combined, these seven risk factors contribute to more than half of the nearly 36 million cases of Alzheimer's disease worldwide and nearly 60% of the 6 million cases in the United States. The investigators selected the seven factors because they have the most consistent evidence for an association with Alzheimer's disease, Dr. Barnes said during a press briefing.

This is particularly important given that the prevalence of Alzheimer's disease is expected to almost triple to 106 million by 2050. The current absence of effective disease-modifying treatment,

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Seven risk factors contribute to nearly 60% of the 6 million cases of Alzheimer's in the U.S.

REMEMBRANCE

Betty Ford Helped Change Thinking on Addiction

Betty Ford never intended to become a symbol and international advocate for substance abuse treatment. At the close of Gerald R. Ford's presidency in early 1977, the first lady anticipated a quiet retirement with her husband in the California desert. Mrs. Ford's use of alcohol and prescription analgesics, originally prescribed for a pinched nerve, fluctuated throughout her adult life but had not yet reached a level of persistent clinical concern.

The Fords' relocation to Rancho Mirage, Calif., offered peace and quiet away from the media glare of Washington, but Betty Ford's use of alcohol and pain medications soon increased to alarming levels. Initial efforts to persuade Mrs. Ford to seek treatment were unsuccessful. But in 1978, her family staged an intervention. After a medical detoxification, she entered the drug rehabilitation program at Long Beach Naval Hospital, based on the Minnesota Model first popularized at Hazelden.

Following her rehabilitation, Mrs. Ford sought to create a treatment center replicating features she found helpful and germane to her own treatment. In 1982, she and her friend Leonard Firestone established the nonprofit Betty Ford Center in Rancho Mirage, where Ford served

as chairman until 2005. More than 90,000 people have received treatment at the Betty Ford Center to this day.

Mrs. Ford's disclosure of her substance abuse during interviews and in her memoir, *Betty: A Glad Awakening* (New York:

Jove Press, 1987), lent legitimacy to the idea of alcohol and drug addiction as disease entities. The stream of celebrities seeking treatment at the Betty Ford Center further legitimized the disease model of drug abuse and need for respectful treatment settings.

A key feature of the Betty Ford Center is gender-specific treatment, with a particular expertise in treating women with substance abuse. In 2003,

Mrs. Ford wrote, "Female patients are reluctant to discuss their failures, fears and anger, their flights of fancy, their shame and guilt, their abuse experiences openly in front of men." To this day, the Betty Ford Center reserves half of its beds for women, and all inpatients are housed in gender-specific residence halls.

Another main aspect of treatment at the Betty Ford Center is an emphasis on family involvement. Mrs. Ford entered treatment at her family's insistence, and soon after her rehabilitation program, her husband gave up alcohol to support his wife's efforts at sobriety ("Betty Ford's final interview with the *Desert Sun*," July



MICHAEL
BRODSKY, M.D.



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Betty Ford helped destigmatize disorders such as depression and bipolar.

8, 2011). Families of inpatients at the Betty Ford Center are invited to participate in Family Week, a psychoeducational program that teaches family members about alcoholism and drug addiction as diseases, and uses role playing and communication strategies to modify dysfunctional family interactions.

More recently, the Betty Ford Center developed a specialized program for licensed professionals struggling with substance abuse, including physicians, nurses, attorneys, and airline pilots. The demand for

services for impaired physicians has increased recently, particularly as state medical boards have modified or eliminated physician diversion programs. Mrs. Ford's work also helped to destigmatize other mental health conditions that co-occur with substance abuse, including depression and bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, and attention deficit disorder. Sound psychiatric treatment and supportive therapies need to be provided in a balanced way to treat these "dual diagnoses." This has led to the emergence of newer residential treatment models in mental illness that utilize a synergistic, holistic approach to empower individuals to become self-aware, self-monitoring, and able to provide for their own sense of emotional control and eventual wholeness.

Betty Ford maintained her sobriety until the end of her life. Because of her dedication to this, and other causes, in 1991 Betty Ford received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George H.W. Bush.

She had a huge role in helping to change the way we think about and treat addiction, and for that we are grateful. ■

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