HEALTHY AGING
SUMMER 2018

OLDER BODY, STRONGER MIND

TECH HELPS EARLY DETECTION

DELIVERING TOP-NOTCH CARE

LIVING WELL

ACTIVITIES, SUPPORT GROUPS FOR ALL


G eropsychiatrist isn’t a word that easily rolls off the tongue, but with the boom in America’s aging population and its health-care needs, there’s no better time to add it to our vocabulary. And for many older adults, it may be the time to develop a relationship with one.

Seniors facing conditions like memory loss, depression, anxiety—even those finding it difficult coping with changes—can seek the help of a geropsychiatrist (geriatric psychiatrist), a doctor who focuses on the prevention, evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders and the improvement of psychiatric care for all patients. The demand for these health-care professionals is increasing because one in five Americans experiences a mental health illness in any given year, and a growing number are seniors. In fact, at least 12 percent of older adults in the community have diagnosable mental disorders—up to 30 to 50 percent in medical settings. The elderly often struggle with the same mental health disorders as other adults, along with age-related conditions, like the depression, anxiety and sleep disorders associated with dementia.

“Are things get better with age because of wisdom—we pick up our battles,” says Dr. Shihabuddin. “The behavior changes, the IQ changes, the way a person’s thinking, the way they communicate, the way they interact with their families. They’re still那里.”

Geropsychiatrists are only part of the management of the geriatric patient. “You need to find a new purpose and new circles of association,” Dr. Shihabuddin says, citing studies identifying a lack of socialization as one of the main risk factors for declining health and mortality in seniors. That’s why often a great prescription is joining a senior center or other active group, she says. And exercise, if permitted by one’s doctor, can include walking, yoga, tai chi—or anything that combats that sedentary lifestyle for about 30 minutes daily.

While a heart doctor works with EKGs and other monitors, the geropsychiatrist will reach her diagnosis based on careful interviews, the patient’s history and background and behavioral observations. Their training goes beyond that of a regular psychiatrist and must include knowledge of all of the medical conditions impacting seniors, Dr. Shihabuddin says.

For those looking to get back on track mentally, RWJBarnabas Health Behavioral Health Center (including Monmouth Medical Center, Southern Campus Behavioral Health Services) has a team of licensed professionals and geriatric psychiatrists, who work alongside senior patients and their families to determine the best treatment. The Behavioral Health Center offers a complete range of inpatient and outpatient mental health services for geriatric patients. And all of the Behavioral Health Center’s services are led by a staff of experienced professionals with advanced training and certification in all areas of behavioral health.

On Aug. 14 from noon to 2 p.m., Dr. Shihabuddin will present “Behavioral Health in Older Adulthood,” a free program at Monmouth Medical Center, Southern Campus. The program will explore some of the most common mental health concerns in older adulthood, as well as prevention and treatment options. See details, including registration information, on page 7.
A GRATEFUL PATIENT:
WARREN SCHUCKIES

This Lakewood resident credits the top-notch care at MMCSC—from the emergency room to rehab—for ‘saving my life.’

Warren Schuckies had just returned from vacation with partner, Marge Cesta, when he started to not feel well. He couldn’t walk or get out of bed and he admittedly hadn’t had his level of Coumadin, a blood thinner used to prevent blood clots caused by atrial fibrillation (AFib), checked in several years.

“Thankfully, I live in the Fairways in Lakewood and Monmouth Medical Center, Southern Campus (MMCSC) was only a short ambulance ride,” said Warren. “I really credit the proximity to the hospital and the immediate, attentive care the staff provided to saving my life.”

Due to the high level Coumadin dosage Warren was taking, he experienced extremely low blood pressure, internal bleeding, a right thigh hematoma and acute kidney failure landing him in the intensive care unit (ICU) for five days. Warren underwent both plasma and blood transfusions and then spent another five days being monitored in an inpatient unit before being transferred to a rehabilitation facility.

“I really put the staff, and especially the nurses, to work during my stay but they were great,” said Warren. “They were constantly friendly and upbeat; I could tell this wasn’t just a job to them but their passion. They were enthusiastic about the hospital and were constantly stopping by and checking in on me, which is a definite benefit to being cared for in a small community hospital.”

After his stay, Warren even requested that the on-call cardiologist, Rajesh Mohan, M.D., become his full-time cardiologist. Warren noted that, prior to being admitted to MMCSC, all of his physicians were located in East Brunswick where he used to live, but he was so impressed by Dr. Mohan’s breadth of knowledge and easygoing demeanor that he made the change on the spot.

“I feel that Dr. Mohan and many of the other physicians at Monmouth South go above and beyond their call of duty and consistently provide a personal touch,” said Warren. “The care received here is superior to other area hospitals, and it would be my first choice every time, no matter what the ailment.”

To find out about cardiology services at Monmouth Medical Center, Southern Campus, call 732.886.4426.
Did You Know?
Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside, a distinction that means they are not classified by botanists as true berries, which house their seeds on the inside. Indeed, the seeds—the average strawberry sports 200—are actually each considered a separate fruit. The U.S. is the world’s top producer of strawberries, and 94 percent of American households consume the fruit.

Power up
A Harvard study of women ages 25 to 42 found that those who ate three or more servings of strawberries and blueberries weekly were less likely to have a heart attack. One reason: Both fruits have a high concentration of anthocyanin, a flavonoid that may help improve blood flow to the heart and reduce plaque.

Grow · Buy · Store
Harvesting season runs through October (depending on the variety). If you like gardening—and the luxury of fresh strawberries—try planting your own patch. Specific requirements differ by variety, but in general, strawberries grow best in loose, fertile, somewhat-acidic soil in a location with full sun. Strawberry plants sprout lots of runners that will form new plants if left unchecked. Cut these runners, and you’ll have a higher berry yield. Strawberries spoil quickly—pick them the day they ripen and use within three days. At the store, look for bright red berries. Refrigerate—either in a single layer in a dish lined with paper towel or in a colander,—and hold off washing until you’re ready to use.

To clean, put strawberries in a colander and rinse with cold water, or wash each one gently with a damp paper towel. You should cut away the leaves and the portion surrounding them because that area can be difficult to clean—but do so after washing because this can change texture and flavor.

80% of U.S. strawberries are grown in California as a perennial crop

103 distinct species of strawberry plants exist

1 strawberry museum exists in the world—it’s in Wépion, Belgium

53% of 7-9 year-olds say that strawberries are their favorite fruit