

Association between Mental Health and Healing among Elderly Physical Therapy Patients

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ABSTRACT

Despite their documented successes, mental health interventions are rarely a focus during physical therapy treatments, particularly among the geriatric population. **PURPOSE:** To measure mental health status and perceived healing among physical therapy patients aged 60 years or older. **METHODS:** Ten participants (5 males, 5 females) were recruited at a local physical therapy clinic. Three participants (*N* males=1, *M* age=67 years, *N* females=2, *M* age=80.5 years), were able to complete a modified version of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item Scale (GAD-7) that included a self-reported healing scale. **RESULTS:** Female participants reported feeling nervous, worried, and fearful less often than the male participant during physical therapy. The oldest participant reported feeling no anxiety during her physical therapy sessions. **CONCLUSION:** Findings suggest that gender may be a factor in self-reported mental health measures and perceived healing during physical therapy. Future studies should increase sample size and examine the associations among self-reported anxiety variables and healing among both genders and various geriatric ages during physical therapy.