

## A study to evaluate the effectiveness of foot reflexology on depression among older adults in selected old age homes.

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### **Abstract**

**Objectives-** To evaluate the effectiveness of foot reflexology on depression among older adults staying in the old age homes. **Method-** One group pre test and post test design. **Result-** It revealed that the calculated "t" value (23.388) was much higher than the table value at 0.01 level of significance with 29 degrees of freedom. **Conclusion-** The study concluded that foot reflexology is a non pharmacological, complementary, and alternative therapy to manage the depression among depressed older adults.

**Keywords:** Foot Reflexology, Older Adults, Depression, Old age Homes.

### **Introduction**

Depression is a hushed killer, which is very hard to diagnose among older adults. Older adults suffer from number of physical and psychological illness, one of the important psychiatric illness is depression. The typical symptoms of depression includes, decreases in energy and concentration, disturbed sleep and loss of appetite, somatic complaints, low self esteem, feeling of hopelessness and suicidal tendencies.<sup>2</sup> Foot Reflexology is applying pressure and massaging the foot that improves blood circulation and flush out the lactic and crystals that are settled in the feet, then they can be reabsorbed and eliminated from the body.<sup>5</sup> These points are under the big toe on the ball of the foot and, towards the inside. Points on the hand and feet that corresponds to the heart, chest, solar plexus, lungs and upper limbs will be applied pressure to alleviate

the symptoms of depression. Applying pressure will develop the discharge of feel good chemical called endorphin will relieve the stress that has big impact on depression.<sup>3</sup> Assessment on level of depression before and after foot reflexology among the older adults. The level of depression was categorized into Normal, Mild and Severe based on the scale given by Geriatric depression scale. The mean and mean percentage score on level of depression was assessed during the study period to check if the intervention had a role in reducing depression among the older adults.

### **Objectives**

- To assess the level of depression among older adults staying in old age homes before and after administration of foot reflexology.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of foot reflexology on depression among older

adults staying in the old age homes.

- To associate the level of depression among the older adults with selected demographic variables.

**Data Analysis**

**Table 1: Assessment on Level of Depression among Older Adults N = 30**

Level	Before intervention			After intervention		
	N	Mean	Mean %	N	Mean	Mean %
(0 -9)	-	-	-	5	8.6	29
(10 -19)	18	17.33	58	25	11.68	39
(20 -30)	12	21.17	71	-	-	-

The above table described the level of depression of older adults before and after foot reflexology. The table revealed that 12( 40%) of the older adults had severe depression (71 %) while 18(60%) had mild depression (58%) before foot reflexology. After foot reflexology the level of depression decreased from severe depression to mild (39%) and normal (29%) levels. Thus the foot reflexology had reduced the level of depression.

**Analysis on the level of depression before and after foot reflexology**

The level of depression among the older adults reveals that there was a decrease in the mean score after foot reflexology. To prove the significance in the result paired't' - test was applied. The above table reveals that the calculated "t" value was much higher than the table value at 0.01 level of significance with 29 degrees of freedom. Thus the research hypothesis

before and after the foot reflexology among the older adults was accepted. Thus the inferential statistical method proves that the difference in the mean scores showed a significant change in the level of depression. Thus foot reflexology was effective in reducing the depression among the older adults.

**Recommendations**

- Nurses can be appointed as regular therapist to conduct foot reflexology sessions in community settings and old age homes. Useful interventions such as entertainment technique, like yoga, meditation can be taught by the nurses to the older adults
- Nurses should make effort to engage all the inmates in attending social activities and special functions
- Positive validation, rewards, support in doing minor activities as much as possible to be enforced.

**Conclusion**

The study concluded that foot reflexology is a non pharmacological, complementary and alternative therapy to manage the depression among depressed older adults.

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**Answer for last Issue (sep-dec15)**

P	R	O	T	E	I	N	S
E	I	S	N	G	M	I	O
L	C	M	E	G	M	M	D
L	K	O	D	U	U	A	I
A	E	S	I	A	N	T	U
G	T	I	X	V	E	I	M
R	S	S	O	A		V	