



Healthways SilverSneakers® Fitness Program

Proven to Reduce Risk of Depression in Medicare Members

Groundbreaking study focuses on benefits for members with depression

Among Medicare-eligible members who have enrolled in the SilverSneakers Fitness Program, greater participation in the program is associated with a significantly lower risk of depression, according to recent a study published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.¹

The study examined data from nearly 5,000 SilverSneakers participants over a two-year period. Researchers assessed the association between depression and the likelihood of enrollment in SilverSneakers, patterns of program participation over two years, and the association between level of participation and risk of depression.

Study: Depression and Use of a Health Plan-Sponsored Physical Activity Program by Older Adults

Depression affects between five and 10 percent of older adults seen in primary care and is associated with decreased adherence to exercise, diet, and taking medication. This is the first study to examine the association between depression and participation in a health plan-sponsored physical activity program for older adults in a non-research environment.

- Members with a history of depression were as likely to participate in SilverSneakers as non-depressed members.
- For members without a diagnosis of depression in the first year of the program, those with two or more visits per week were less likely to be diagnosed with depression in the second year than members with less than two visits per week.

To obtain more information about this study, please visit www.healthways.com.

For more information on the SilverSneakers Fitness Program, call 480.783.9555 or visit www.silversneakers.com.



Participation in SilverSneakers may help members avoid depression:

- Depressed members are as likely to participate in SilverSneakers as non-depressed members.
- Greater participation in SilverSneakers may help prevent non-depressed members from developing depression.

¹ Huong, N.Q., Koepsell, T., Unutzer, J., Larson, E., & LoGerfo, J.P. (2008). Depression and Use of a Health Plan-Sponsored Physical Activity Program by Older Adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 35(2), 111-117. [http://www.ajpm-online.net/article/S07493797\(08\)00381-4/abstract](http://www.ajpm-online.net/article/S07493797(08)00381-4/abstract).