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POSTSTROKE DEPRESSION IN ELDERLY, A REVIEW

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**Introduction:** Mood disturbances are often found in stroke patients and have a negative impact both on the recovery and the outcome of the stroke. Depression is the most common neuropsychiatric complication in the poststroke population, affecting nearly 30%-50% of patients within the first year. PSD implies a significant burden on both patients and their caregivers.

**Material and methods:** Using the search engines Pubmed and Scopus, 20 papers regarding the elderly dated from 2002-2010 were reviewed using the keywords depression, poststroke, recovery after stroke.

**Results:** The core features of PSD include but are not limited to: persistent sadness, feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and worthlessness, guilt and sense of being a burden on the caregiver, lack of motivation, loss of interest, death wishes and suicidal ideation. Various cerebrovascular risk factors, including hypertension, atherosclerotic heart disease, hyperlipidemia and diabetes mellitus have been implicated as risks for depression in late life. Other predisposing factors are: prior history of depression or anxiety disorder, certain personality traits, baseline dementia but also, social isolation, living alone, physical functional impairments or a history of other psychiatric disorder.

**Conclusion:** Depression may impede recovery from stroke and impair outcome by affecting social functioning, motor abilities, cognitive functions and quality of life, thus it is important to early diagnose and prevent PSD.