

MEDIA STATEMENT

Monday, August 11, 2009

DEPRESSION STUDY SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Like you and I, John*, a research volunteer for the B-VITAge study, has personal goals. On face value John is a pretty ordinary bloke, sixty five years old, tertiary educated and gainfully employed. John, however, has been feeling trapped and not able to move forward because of depression. He has been feeling like this for over 30 years.

The B-VITAge study, conducted by the WA Centre for Health and Ageing at The University of Western Australia, is investigating better ways to treat depression in older people.

“I have been feeling bad about myself for many years and have lost interest in the things that used to interest me. I realised something was wrong, but I couldn’t put my finger on it,” says John. “These symptoms also cost me a beautiful relationship, as I was not a very nice person to live with anymore.”

“I urge people who suffer with similar feelings to consider joining the study. It may make the difference between a miserable old age and a happy and fulfilling one.”

WACHA and Royal Perth Hospital psychiatrist, Dr Andrew Ford, is seeking volunteers, like John, who are feeling low in mood or have lost their drive and interest in life to be involved in the study.

“This study hopes to find that vitamin supplements, used in conjunction with medications, can contribute to relieving the symptoms of depression,” said Dr Ford.

An estimated eight per cent of older Australian adults suffer from depression at some point and it is predicted that depression will be the second leading cause of disability worldwide within the next 10 years, clearly making this a major public health problem.

All study participants will receive standard antidepressant treatment with either additional vitamin or placebo supplements. For further information please contact WACHA on 9224 2855.

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*A pseudonym been used to protect the research volunteer’s privacy

For more information about WACHA or the B-Vitage study:
www.wacha.org.au