

Identifying and Treating Hypertension through Holistic Brain Health: An Exploratory, Scoping, and Feasibility Study

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Background/Rationale: Hypertension is a key risk factor for heart disease, stroke, and dementia, the three most burdensome conditions affecting the brain and overall health. Almost half of Canadians are either unaware of their hypertension or lack proper control of it, providing excellent potential for the prevention of the three conditions. Prevention effects can be increased through the adoption of a healthy lifestyle. We aim to investigate what are the minimum healthy lifestyle habits to achieve the maximum control of hypertension and holistic brain health.

Methods: We will develop and test a tool for measuring holistic brain health. The intervention focuses on a simple ABC, Activity and rest, including sleep, a Balanced diet, and Connecting with others to support individual mental and physical health. The study population will comprise people around retirement. We will incorporate validated motivational techniques to facilitate maintenance within physician practice.

Results: We will use validated motivational techniques to increase the efficacy and durability of behavioural changes. We will develop the simple time-effective ABCs for promoting holistic brain health. We will encourage each of the components namely Activity and sleep, Balanced diet, and Connecting with others, but stress the magnifying advantages of doing all three. We seek to maximise the possible benefits of intentionally minor, controlled changes in daily habits. We will address the simple steps that will encourage people to think, feel, and connect with others better in the short term and reduce the risk of ischemic heart disease, stroke, and dementia in the long term.

Conclusions: With this project, we will consider three main intertwined components of brain function, namely cerebral, mental, and social, which will benefit overall health and well-being. We hope to implement a holistic brain health approach to standard practice regarding the treatment of hypertension to reduce stroke, heart disease, and dementia risks, and lead to improved brain and overall health.

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