

Physician Fact Sheet on Addressing Spirituality in Middle Age or Older Persons as a Component to Successful Cognitive Aging

1. Spirituality is an important component of psychosocial wellbeing for some elders.
2. Physicians can discuss the value of spirituality with patients who express an interest in this subject.
3. A patient's active spirituality may improve their hospital outcomes.
4. Active spirituality may reduce the risk for depression during hospitalization.
5. An active spiritual life may improve quality of life at the end of life for some elders.
6. Physicians should avoid proselytizing with patients.
7. Most patients are receptive to a respectful discussion about their spiritual life.
8. Lonely elders have an increased risk for dementia.
9. Spiritual communities offer intellectual and social stimulation.
10. Doctors can encourage continued participation in spiritual activities as part of the "wellness program".