

SHOULD YOU LISTEN TO YOUR HEART OR HEAD?



Whenever you are upset, you feel your heart beating faster or your breathing becoming quicker and shallower, right? When you are in a depressed state, succumbing to the temptation of mindlessly grabbing on to unhealthy food is an easier solution to find comfort. Or so most people think.

We may not give it much thought, but the heart and the mind are interconnected. Numerous research studies have shown that many individuals with cardiovascular disease have increased levels of depression and symptoms of anxiety. On the other hand, those who suffer from mental illness are at a higher risk of suffering from diseases of the heart and vascular system.

This vicious cycle indicates a clear need for heightened screening and preventative care for patients with cardiovascular (heart) and neurological (brain) illnesses.



HEALTHY EVER AFTER
CHESHIRE QUE,
RND, RN, RD

Recently, Sandoz Philippines Corporation gathered Filipino cardiologists, neurologists, and psychiatrists for its first ever Heart, Mind, and Brain Summit at the Ascott Hotel Makati to shed light on the intimate, intricate, and underestimated relationship between the heart and the brain.

"In line with the Sandoz mission to improve and extend people's lives, we are honored to collaborate with Filipino cardiologists, neurologists, and psychiatrists in unraveling the interaction between the heart and the brain and the most basic risk factor; which is stress," said **Eleanor Lopez**, country head of Sandoz Philippines Corporation.

The meaning of stress and its impact may be different for each individual. In fact, according to Dr. **Gerardo Carmelo Salazar**, consultant neuro-psychiatrist at the Lucena United Doctors Hospital and Medical Center, stress is a vague word, noting that stressors and their

effects vary across individuals. He also explained that there are currently no standardized and validated parameters to quantify stress.

As such, assessing stress levels is done on an individualized basis. "It is clear, however, that uncontrolled and prolonged stress negatively impacts virtually all the organs of the body," said Dr. Salazar.

Unfortunately, stress is one thing that we cannot totally omit from our lives, although some causes of stress can be avoided. It is how we manage stress effectively and positively that is more important.

"In an attempt to cope with stress, some individuals adopt unhealthy lifestyles or behaviors such as smoking, excessive alcohol intake, or even overeating," said Dr. **Antonio C. Sison**, a consultant psychiatrist at St. Luke's Medical Center and Medical Towers Medical City.

The unhealthy lifestyle and behaviors often adopted by and observed among highly stressed individuals must not be taken lightly. Dr. **Epifania Collantes**, a consultant neurolo-

gist and stroke specialist at the Manila Doctors Hospital and UP-PGH, warned that stress is one of the major risk factors for heart attack and stroke.

Protect yourself from heart and brain attack by paying attention to your

way. Being physically active will help elevate your mood and keep your blood pressure and cholesterol at bay. Learning how to positively express yourself and communicating will help ease your burden. If you feel like you can no longer

Numerous studies have shown that many individuals with cardiovascular disease have increased levels of depression and symptoms of anxiety. On the other hand, those who suffer from mental illness are at a higher risk of suffering from diseases of the heart and vascular system.

thoughts and emotions, as well as what you do whenever your emotions go haywire. Choosing heart, brain, and mood-friendly food with the help of a registered nutritionist dietitian will go a long

way. Being physically active will help elevate your mood and keep your blood pressure and cholesterol at bay. Learning how to positively express yourself and communicating will help ease your burden. If you feel like you can no longer deal with stress alone, it is best to consult a doctor for proper guidance.

cheshireque@gmail.com
Instagram: @cheshirequedn