

Mobility key to quality of life for MS sufferers

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(Medical Xpress) -- Reduced mobility among patients with secondary-progressive multiple sclerosis (SPMS) is associated with a decline in quality of life, according to new data presented today at the 7th World Congress of NeuroRehabilitation in Melbourne.

According to UNSW's Associate Professor of Neuroscience, Arun Krishnan, whether or not symptomatic treatments that improve [walking speed](#) might also make a positive contribution to [MS patients'](#) quality of life is an important focus for future research.

Professor Krishnan's research looked at data derived from 160 placebo treated MS patients whose speed was measured using the Timed 25 Foot Walk (T25FW) test and then correlated this with quality of life measures (including a physical component summary scale, physical function, bodily pain and general health) over a two year period.

Overall, slower walking speed was associated with a decline in quality of life over two years. This association between walking speed and quality of life was independent of any treatment because the subjects were derived from the placebo arm of a clinical trial.

At two years, data showed that patients walked on average 19% slower. Physical component scores (like physical function and general health) declined in patients who walked more than 0.15 metres/second slower at month 24 compared with baseline and improved in the small number who walked greater than 0.15 metres/second faster.

Professor Krishnan says the findings are important as they suggest a clinical focus on the treatment of reduced mobility in MS patients might deliver significant benefits in the future to patients with secondary-progressive [multiple sclerosis](#).

“There are limited treatment options for patients whose MS is progressing and who are at the ‘secondary progressive’ phase. Whether treatments that improve walking also positively influence health-related quality of life in MS patients is certainly an intriguing question for the future,” said Professor Krishnan.

Provided by University of New South Wales

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