# Depression indicators predict work disabilty more than disease activity or response to therapy

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Data presented today at EULAR 2013, the Annual Congress of the European League Against Rheumatism, demonstrate that indicators of depression are stronger predictors of work disability in early arthritis than disease activity or response to therapy.

The study showed that in a [multivariable analysis](#) none of the arthritis activity measures or cardiovascular, metabolic or pulmonary diseases investigated were associated with early retirement, yet a single depression statement "having little pleasure or interest in doing things most of the days during the past 2 weeks" identified those patients more likely to request disability pension.

"Our findings demonstrate that whether or not patients with early arthritis consider applying for disability pension is more dependent on mental conditions than disease activity. As arthritis has a significant financial impact on patients and society, well-directed attention on well-being in the early stages of disease may help patients remain in the workforce", commented lead author of the study Professor Angela Zink, Head of the Epidemiology Unit at the German Rheumatism Research Centre in Berlin.

Musculoskeletal diseases affect at least 100 million people in Europe, accounting for one half of all European absences from work and 60% of work incapacity. If inadequately managed, they represent a significant

economic burden on European society, estimated to be up to 2% of GDP.2

573 patients