

# Difficulty may be encountered identifying emotions conveyed by posture

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Recognizing the emotions other people feel is crucial for establishing proper interpersonal relations. To do so, we look at (amongst other things) facial expressions and body posture. Unfortunately, in some neurological disorders this ability is heavily impaired.

This happens, for example, in [multiple sclerosis](#) where scientific evidence shows that people affected by the disease often have trouble recognizing expressions that communicate emotions. A new study now demonstrates that the same difficulty may also be encountered with emotions conveyed by posture. In addition, the study shows that this difficulty recognizing other people's emotions is unrelated to difficulties identifying one own's emotions, a disorder known as alexithymia, which may be present in patients with multiple sclerosis.

"The finding on posture is new, and even though this symptom is less pronounced than the inability to read [facial expressions](#), it is nonetheless important" explains Marilena Aiello, a SISSA researcher. "Studies on the identification of expressions in neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis are important. In this type of disease the relationship between patients and carers is crucial to guarantee the patient the best quality of life. It's thus vital to identify the factors that may influence and improve this relationship".

In addition to Aiello, the other SISSA researchers who participated in the study, published in the Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society, are Cinzia Cecchetto (first author) and

Raffaella Rumiati, a SISSA neuroscientist who coordinated the research project.

**More information:** "Facial and Bodily Emotion Recognition in Multiple Sclerosis: The Role of Alexithymia and Other Characteristics of the Disease." [dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1355617714000939](https://doi.org/10.1017/S1355617714000939)

Provided by Sissa Medialab

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