

MS researchers link cognition with limited activity and participation

August 21 2015



Nancy Chiaravalloti, Ph.D., and Yael Goverover, Ph.D., specialize in cognitive MS research at Kessler Foundation. Credit: Kessler Foundation

Kessler Foundation researchers found that processing speed is the primary limiting factor associated with activity and participation in everyday life among people with multiple sclerosis (MS). "Factors that moderate activity limitation and participation restriction in people with multiple sclerosis" was published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*. This is the first MS study of cognition and measures of activity and participation. The authors are Yael Goverover, PhD, of New York University and visiting professor at Kessler Foundation, and Lauren Strober, PhD, Nancy Chiaravalloti, PhD, and John DeLuca, PhD, of Kessler Foundation.

MS, the leading cause of disability in working age adults, has a substantial negative impact on quality of life. The employment rate declines from 90% to 20% to 30% within five years of diagnosis, and only 35% of individuals with documented MS report normal social and lifestyle activities. Identifying modifiable factors associated with these limitations may help occupational therapists develop effective interventions. Because cognitive impairments are often implicated in declines in [social participation](#) and employment, researchers examined cognitive factors associated with both activity and participation. The study, which included 72 individuals with MS, focused on cooking ability for activity and employment status for participation. Assessment included neuropsychological testing of memory, executive function, visual perception, and processing speed, and questionnaires about fatigue, affective symptoms, activity and participation.

"The only variable significantly related to activity and participation was processing speed," noted Dr. Goverover. "For occupational therapists, this means that implementing strategies that improve processing speed may help people with MS maintain their daily activities and stay in the workplace. In light of the close association between cognitive factors and cooking, providers should be aware that decline in cooking skills may be sign of cognitive decline in MS."

More information: *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, [DOI: 10.5014/ajot.2015.014332](https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2015.014332)

Provided by Kessler Foundation

Citation: MS researchers link cognition with limited activity and participation (2015, August 21)
retrieved 27 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-08-ms-link-cognition-limited.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.