

Depression symptoms linked to problems with daily activities for older Japanese adults

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Recently, researchers investigated whether depressive symptoms might make it harder for older adults to perform their regular daily activities. The researchers also wanted to find out whether living circumstances or marital status had any impact on whether depressive symptoms affected older adults' abilities to perform daily activities.

Symptoms of depression are common among older adults. Signs of [depressive symptoms](#) include:

- Loss of interest in self-care and/or following medical advice
- Little interest in social activities
- Feeling "empty" inside
- Trouble sleeping and/or feeling anxious
- Trouble concentrating or remembering things
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Change in appetite and weight
- Feelings of helplessness
- Feeling that one is a burden

The [researchers](#) examined information from 769 older adults who participated in the Kurabuchi Study starting in 2005. The study was designed to look at how well adults 65-years-old and older could perform their daily functions. The researchers published their study in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

The researchers examined information from older adults who could

function well at the start of the study. Then the researchers noted any depressive symptoms among the participants. At the end of the 7.5-year-long study, the researchers learned that 30 percent of the participants had symptoms of depression. They also learned that participants with depression symptoms were more likely to have problems in the future performing their regular daily activities.

The association between symptoms of depression and having trouble performing [daily activities](#) in the future was not affected by living circumstances or [marital status](#). However, the researchers noted that [older adults](#) with symptoms of depression who were married or living with family had an increased risk for being institutionalized.

More information: Jayant M. Pinto et al, Global Sensory Impairment Predicts Morbidity and Mortality in Older U.S. Adults, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.15031](https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.15031)

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