

Researchers find well-being differs with age in multiple sclerosis

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Demyelination by MS. The CD68 colored tissue shows several macrophages in the area of the lesion. Original scale 1:100. Credit: [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) Marvin 101/Wikipedia

A recent brief report by MS researchers provides preliminary evidence that older individuals with multiple sclerosis (MS) report lower levels of depression and higher quality of life than their younger counterparts.

These findings are consistent with the trend toward improvement in well-being with age in the general population. The article, "Subjective well-being differs with age in multiple sclerosis: A brief reports", was published in *Rehabilitation Psychology*.

The authors are Brocha Z. Stern (NYU), Ph.D., Lauren Strober, Ph.D., and John DeLuca, Ph.D., (Kessler Foundation) and Yael Goverover, Ph.D. (NYU visiting professor at Kessler Foundation).

The participants were 57 individuals with MS, ages 35 to 65. Divided into three age groups: 35-44, 45-54, and 55-65. Depression was measured by the Chicago Multiscale Depression Inventory; Quality of life (QOL) was measured by the Physical and Mental scores on the MS QOL-54. The researchers found significant between-group differences for both measures. The oldest group reported the lowest levels of depressive symptoms and the highest levels of Physical QOL.

"These results were unexpected," said Dr. Strober, senior research scientist at Kessler Foundation, "given the functional limitations, disease progression, and neurological lesions seen in the aging MS population. Contrary to our hypothesis, the trend by age paralleled that of the [general population](#)."

"These findings suggest that younger individuals with MS are at greater risk for [depression](#) and poor QOL," summarized Dr. Strober. "If this trend is confirmed in future studies, targeted screening for depression by age may be warranted in this population."

More information: Brocha Z. Stern et al, Subjective well-being differs with age in multiple sclerosis: A brief report., *Rehabilitation Psychology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1037/rep0000220](https://doi.org/10.1037/rep0000220)

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