

# Higher grit scores tied to wellness in surgery residents

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(HealthDay)—For general surgery residents, higher grit scores are

associated with lower likelihood of burnout, thoughts of attrition, and suicidal thoughts, according to a study published online June 30 in *JAMA Surgery*.

D. Brock Hewitt, M.D., M.P.H., from the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University in Chicago, and colleagues characterized grit, defined as perseverance and passion for [long-term goals](#), and assessed its association with wellness outcomes in a cross-sectional study of 7,464 clinically active U.S. general [surgery](#) residents (99.3 percent responded). The eight-item Short Grit Scale was used to measure grit.

The researchers found that significantly higher mean grit scores were seen in women, in residents in postgraduate training year 4 or 5, and in residents who were married (3.72 points for each group); the absolute magnitude of the differences was small. Residents with higher grit scores were significantly less likely to report duty hour violations, dissatisfaction with becoming a surgeon, burnout, thoughts of attrition, and [suicidal thoughts](#) in adjusted analyses (odds ratios, 0.85, 0.53, 0.53, 0.61, and 0.58, respectively). There was no association seen for grit scores with American Board of Surgery In-Training Examination performance. Mean program-level grit scores ranged from 3.18 to 4.09 points for individual residency programs.

"These results, along with previous research by other investigators and institutions, should encourage stakeholders to incorporate [grit](#) assessment in their efforts to improve [resident](#) and physician wellness; however, great care and caution must be observed in doing so," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical and medical device industries.

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