

# Depressive symptoms increased among seniors during COVID-19

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(HealthDay)—During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase in

the prevalence of clinically significant depressive symptoms among older adults, according to a study published online Dec. 22 in *JAMA Psychiatry*.

Paola Zaninotto, Ph.D., from the University College London, and colleagues conducted a longitudinal cohort study involving data from 5,146 [older adults](#) participating in the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing. Participants provided data before the COVID-19 pandemic and on two occasions in 2020 (June or July and November or December).

The researchers observed an increase in the prevalence of clinically significant depressive symptoms from 12.5 percent before the COVID-19 pandemic to 22.6 and 28.5 percent in June and July and in November and December 2020, respectively. The increase was accompanied by increased loneliness and a decline in quality of life. From June and July 2020 to November and December 2020, the prevalence of anxiety increased from 9.4 to 10.9 percent. Worse changes in mental health were experienced by women and nonpartnered individuals. Before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the lowest levels of mental health were seen for participants with less wealth. Better mental health overall was seen for higher socioeconomic groups, but they responded to the COVID-19 [pandemic](#) with more [negative changes](#).

"As the COVID-19 crisis extends beyond 2020, there is a need to sustain the [mental health](#) of older people in the population and to plan [health](#) and social support services as face-to-face contact becomes more feasible," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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