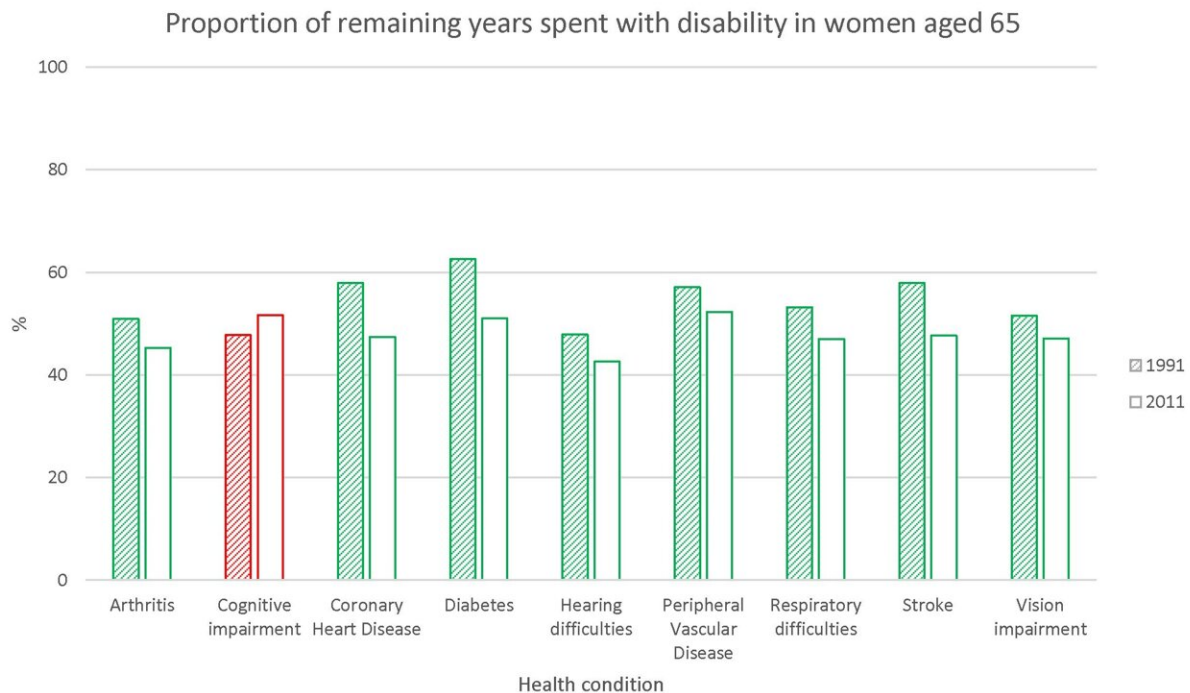


'Healthspan' is increasing even for people with common chronic conditions

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By 2011, older people with most health conditions were living longer and spending a smaller proportion of remaining life with disability, than their counterparts in 1991. Cognitive impairment was the only health condition where the prevalence decreased between 1991 and 2011 but where the proportion of remaining life spent with disability increased. Credit: Holly Bennett (CC-BY 4.0, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

The number of healthy years a person lives is, on average, increasing even for people with common chronic conditions, according to a new study publishing March 15 in *PLOS Medicine* by Holly Bennett of Newcastle University, UK, and colleagues.

Over recent decades, there have been advances in [healthcare](#) that mean many people with [chronic health conditions](#) are living longer. In the new study, researchers wanted to determine whether this extension to life involves an increase in years with or without disability. The team analyzed data from two large population-based studies of people aged 65 or over in England. The studies, the Cognitive Function and Aging Studies (CFAS I and II) involved baseline interviews with 7,635 people in 1991-1993 and with 7,762 people in 2008-2011, with two years of follow-up in each case.

For both healthy people and those with [health conditions](#), the average years of disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) increased from 1991 to 2011. Overall, men gained 4.6 years in life expectancy (95% CI: 3.7-5.5 years, p

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