

Physical activity may prevent fatigue in patients with MS

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A study led by the University of Eastern Finland found that better physical condition and higher daily activity predicted lower levels of fatigue in patients with relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis, RRMS. A

lower disability rate was also associated with less fatigue. The study was published in the journal *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders*.

Fatigue is one of the most common symptoms in multiple sclerosis [patients](#), but assessing its effects on patients' daily lives is challenging. The aim of the study was to investigate the association of RRMS patients' fatigue with their accelerometer-measured physical activity, as well as with their disability.

The study used a wide range of different measurement methods, measuring physical activity with an accelerometer and measuring fatigue with two different meters (MFIS and FSS), and mapping disability using two different methods (EDSS and MSFC), including different physical performance tests.

Patients whose level of disability as assessed by the EDSS was at the level of 0–2.5, i.e., moderately low, were found to have a higher level of fatigue than healthy controls, but lower than patients whose level of disability was higher (EDSS 3–5.5). A [significant relationship](#) was found between fatigue and disability, and between daily physical activity and fatigue. A lower disability rate, better [physical condition](#) and higher daily activity predicted lower fatigue levels.

Fatigue plays a significant role in MS and has a strong impact on, for example, patients' ability to work and premature retirement. This is of great importance socially.

"The findings are interesting and support previous studies very well. Patients with MS should find a suitable form of exercise, taking into account their disability, which maintains their functional capacity and reduces [fatigue](#)," says Doctoral Researcher Marko Luostarinen of the University of Eastern Finland.

"This study is unique because it was large and used modern methods. However, more detailed research into patients' disability and actual [physical activity](#) levels is needed," Luostarinen points out.

More information: Marko Luostarinen et al, Correlation of fatigue with disability and accelerometer-measured daily physical activity in patients with relapsing-remitting MS, *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.msard.2023.104908](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.msard.2023.104908)

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