

## Depression May Raise Risks of Dementia

Previous studies have suggested that depression may increase the risk of developing dementia later in life. Jane Saczynski, from the University of Massachusetts Medical School (Massachusetts, USA), and colleagues examined data collected on 949 people, average age of 79 years., enrolled in the Framingham Heart Study. At the study's start, participants were free of dementia and were tested for depressive symptoms; a total of 125 people, or 13%, were classified as having depression at the start of the study. The participants were followed for up to 17 years. At the end of the study, 164 people had developed dementia with 136 specifically diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Nearly 22% subjects who were depressed at the study's start developed dementia, compared to about 17%; equating to a 70% increased risk in those who were depressed. The risks were the same regardless of a person's age, sex, education and whether they had the APOE gene that increases a person's risk of Alzheimer's disease.

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J.S. Saczynski, A. Beiser, S. Seshadri, S. Auerbach, P.A. Wolf, R. Au. "Depressive symptoms and risk of dementia: The Framingham Heart Study." *Neurology*, Jul 2010; 75: 35 - 41.