

# Older age tied to poorer course of major depressive disorder

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(HealthDay)—Older age is associated with poorer course of major

depressive disorder (MDD), according to a study published online June 7 in *The Lancet Psychiatry*.

Roxanne Schaakxs, Ph.D., from VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam, and colleagues obtained data for 1,042 participants with MDD at baseline, who had data available at baseline and two-year follow-up. The primary outcome was the two-year course of MDD, assessed with four indicators.

The researchers observed a significant correlation for [older age](#) with a worse two-year MDD course for all four indicators (MDD diagnosis: odds ratio, 1.08; chronic symptom course: odds ratio, 1.24; time to remission: hazard ratio, 0.91; and depression severity change: regression coefficient, 1.06). The MDD course worsened linearly with age; the worst outcomes were seen for people aged 70 years and older compared with those of the reference group aged 18 to 29 years (MDD diagnosis: odds ratio, 2.02; chronic symptom course, odds ratio, 3.19; time to remission: hazard ratio, 0.60; and depression severity change:  $-12.64$  and  $-5.57$  in those aged 18 to 29 and 70 years or older, respectively). After adjustment for prognostic clinical, social, and health factors, the results were slightly attenuated, but remained mostly significant.

"Further investigation of potential underlying mechanisms—including the effect of cognitive impairment, for example—is needed to prevent the negative consequences of a long-term MDD burden in older people," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)

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