

## **Influence of Depression on the Activity of Daily Life in the Elderly**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Depression is the most usual mental disorder in the elderly, but underdiagnosed and undertreated. Its prevalence is variable and depends on type and severity of episode.

Depression in the elderly is difficult to define clearly and the significance of depression screening for the comprehensive health status of the elderly has remained unclear. The purpose of this study was to examine a prevalence of depression defined as mini Geriatric depression scale in 598 people aged more than 65 years living in their home in the Monastir City (Tunisia), and to clarify the relationship of depression with ADL.

**Methods :** A cross-sectional study was carried out in Monastir City. A random sample of non institutionalised elderly was drawn from the National institute of statistics. A community based sample of 598 (female 66 %, mean (SD) age 72.3 (7.4) years) elderly was selected. Depression symptoms were assessed using a mini-Geriatric Depression Scale.

**Results:** One hundred and thirty six participants (22.7 %) had suggestive depression using mini GDS. Fifty-seven (9.5 %) had disability. Depression was strongly associated with female gender (27.5 % vs 13.4 %,  $p < 0.001$ ), disability (45.6 % for completely dependent vs 17 % for completely independent,  $p < 0.0001$ ). Subjects with depression revealed significantly lower scores for ADL than those without depression. A gradual decreasing incidence of depression was noted with increasing level of education. Residing in a joint family system with satisfying family relationship protects against depression. A significant association was noted between Co morbidity, poly-medication diabetes and depression. Based on a logistic regression analysis disability is a strong independent predictor of depression in the elderly.

**Conclusions:** The prevalence of depression in the elderly population in our study was moderately high and associated with lower ADL and complete dependency.