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[PSYCH](#) > Vol.2 No.9, December 2011



Self-Rated Health and Survival: A Seven-Years Follow-Up

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ABSTRACT

The association between self-rated health and mortality has been well documented, but not completely understood. The purpose of this study was to search for the components of self-rated health among the elderly, drawing on the framework recently proposed by Jylhä (2009) and the degree to which these predict survival. 535 seniors were interviewed, of whom 121 passed away during the seven years that followed. Self-rated health was significantly related to a variety of health and social indicators, which appeared to be represented by five health and three social characteristics: chronic conditions, physical functioning, the ability to perform daily activity, mental health, body pain, economic state, expected future health, and peers' health. Contrary to Jylhä's (2009) suggestion, formal signs of illness and diagnosed life threatening conditions were not related to self-rated health. Self-rated health was related to mortality along with age, sex, physical and cognitive functioning, and systolic blood pressure. Only physical functioning predicted both mortality and self-rated health. It appears that self-rated health is comprised of health information that is not directly related to mortality.

KEYWORDS

Self-Rated Health, Components of Self-Rated Health, Survival, Health Measures

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