

# Increased Odds for Depression and Antidepressant Use in the Inactive Spanish Population

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Depression is a disabling mental illness and therefore also a serious public health problem. It affects 5% of the adult population in the world and is the leading cause of disability, with an annual cost of USD one trillion. In Spain, its prevalence is 13.4%, costing EUR 6000 million a year. Physical inactivity has been linked to an increase in depressive symptoms, with physical activity associated with an improvement in health-related quality of life. **Objective:** To calculate the odds ratio (OR) and relative risk (RR) of suffering from depression and taking antidepressants in the inactive Spanish population compared to groups with a higher level of physical activity. **Method:** 17,141 individuals aged 18–69 years residing in Spain and interviewed in the 2017 Spanish National Health Survey were included in this cross-sectional investigation. **Results:** Dependence relationships were found between the level of physical activity and the prevalence of depression and taking antidepressants ( $p < 0.001$ ). We found elevated ORs and RRs for depression and antidepressant use in inactive people compared to those with a high/very high level of physical activity (Depression: OR: 4.32. CI95%: 3.35–5.57. RR: 1.59. 95% CI: 1.51–1.68; Antidepressants: OR: 4.95. CI95%: 3.59–6.82. RR: 1.61. CI95%: 1.52–1.71). **Conclusions:** Belonging to an inactive population group increases the risk of suffering from depression and of taking antidepressants. © 2022 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland.

## Author keywords

Active population; Antidepressants; Depression; Health; Inactive population; Physical activity; Sedentary lifestyle