

## New Birmingham Research Findings: Recovery from hip fracture hindered by depression

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As many as 40% of older people who suffer a hip fracture develop depressive symptoms, which according to researchers from the University of Birmingham, could hinder their recovery.

This new research shows that depression has a negative effect on both the physical recovery of older people and on their immune system, which becomes compromised leaving them at risk of developing other infections. Rather worrying, at least half of people who suffer a hip fracture never regain their previous walking abilities and up to a quarter may die within a year of the fracture with many more developing infections and illnesses.



**Professor Janet Lord** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/iandi/lord-janet.aspx>), director of the MRC-ARUK Centre for Musculoskeletal Ageing Research, said: "We went in to this study assuming that the stress of a hip fracture would be the major factor resulting in poor immune function in these patients and that depression might make things a little worse. Instead the data revealed that the depression was the major factor influencing how well a patient recovered. Our work emphasises the importance of preventing or treating depression in this vulnerable patient group. Such a simple intervention could save many lives and reduce costs to the NHS."

A clinical trial is now planned by the Birmingham team who conducted this research to further understand the effects of depression on recovery from hip fracture, and the possible use of nutritional supplements.

You can **read more about these findings** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/08/2-aug-2013-depression-in-hip-fracture-patients-hinders-recovery.aspx>) on the University's main news page.