

Public Abstract

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Graduation Term: Fall

Graduation Year: 2006

Title: Impact of Symptoms on Quality of Life in Women with Relapsing-Remitting Multiple Sclerosis (RRMS) and Healthy Women

Persons with multiple sclerosis (MS) often experience a number of adverse symptoms. The purpose of this study was to examine pain, fatigue, depression, sleep disturbance, and their impact on health-related quality of life in community-dwelling women with RRMS compared to age and location matched healthy women. Pain was more prevalent in women with RRMS than healthy women. Average pain intensity over a 7-day period was higher in women with RRMS than healthy women. Additionally, pain interfered more with general activities in women with RRMS than healthy women. The presence of pain had a negative impact on fatigue, depression, and sleep disturbance intensity in all women in this study. In all women, fatigue, depression, and sleep disturbance contributed to decreased mental aspects of quality of life. Also, fatigue contributed the most to decreased physical aspects of quality of life in all women. Furthermore, being a woman with RRMS was a predictor for decreased physical quality of life. The findings from this study will assist health care providers in the development of interventions to relieve symptoms and improve quality of life in women with RRMS and all women.