

THE IMPACT OF SYMPTOMS ON QUALITY OF LIFE IN WOMEN
WITH RELAPSING-REMITTING MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (RRMS)
AND HEALTHY WOMEN

Pamela Kay Newland

Dr. Deidre D. Wipke-Tevis and Dr. Donna A. Williams, Dissertation Supervisors

ABSTRACT

Persons with multiple sclerosis (MS) experience a number of symptoms. The purpose of this study was to examine pain, fatigue, depression, sleep disturbance, and quality of life in women with RRMS and healthy women. Women with RRMS had more prevalent pain ($p = .005$), average pain intensity ($p = .001$), and pain interference ($p = .0008$) than healthy women. Pain had a negative impact on fatigue ($p = .005$), depression ($p = .001$), and sleep disturbance ($p = .002$) in all women. In all women, fatigue ($p < .003$), depression ($p < .0001$), and sleep disturbance ($p < .005$) contributed to decreased mental quality of life. Fatigue contributed to decreased physical quality of life in all women ($p < .0001$). Being a woman with RRMS was a predictor for decreased physical quality of life ($p < .0001$). Research is needed to improve symptoms and quality of life in all women.