

(both were not significant), total activity time/frequency, age, gender, race, education, and self-rated health. Results suggest that future activity interventions may need to target those with lower extraversion.

#### CAN ECOLOGICAL MOMENTARY ASSESSMENTS BE USED AS DAILY MARKERS OF PERSONALITY TRAITS?

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This study hypothesized that select ecological momentary assessment (EMA) survey items are sensitive to day-to-day fluctuations in personality traits Extraversion (E) and Neuroticism (N). As part of the Einstein Aging Study, 312 older adults (Mage=76.96 years, SD=4.85 years, range=70-90 years) completed up to 5 EMA surveys per day for 16 days and a Big Five trait personality measure. Parallel two-factor multilevel confirmatory factor analyses were conducted for E (Daily-E; Trait-E) and N (Daily-N; Trait-N). The E model showed good fit (CFI=.95; TLI=.94; RMSEA=.02) and a significant correlation of .20 between Daily-E and Trait-E factors. The N model showed poor fit (CFI=.68; TLI=.61; RMSEA=.06). Results suggest EMA items can be used as daily markers of Extraversion, yet results are unclear for Neuroticism due to poor model fit. Daily markers of Extraversion can be used to detect fluctuations in personality traits across days that may predict long-term personality change.

#### AFFECT REACTIVITY TO DAILY STRESSORS MEDIATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

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Researchers hypothesize that how people react to daily stressful events partly explains the personality-health relationship, yet no study has examined longitudinal associations between these factors. The current study examined the role of negative affect reactivity to daily stressors as a mediating pathway between personality and physical health outcomes using three waves of data spanning 20-years from a nationwide probability sample of 1,176 adults. Results indicate that Wave 1 neuroticism was associated with greater negative affect reactivity at Wave 2, which then predicted the development of chronic conditions and functional limitations at Wave 3. Higher conscientiousness was associated with less negative affect reactivity, which in turn predicted better physical health at Wave 3. Negative affect reactivity partially

mediated both personality traits and physical. These findings highlight the usefulness of using a daily stress framework for understanding how personality impacts health over time, which has important implications for disease prevention.

#### Session 2455 (Symposium)

##### ORAL HEALTH'S TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT ON DIET AND SYSTEMIC HEALTH OUTCOMES

Chair: Michele Saunders

The 2020-25 Dietary Guidelines for Americans identified dental caries as a major diet-related chronic disease of public health concern and suggested in the section for adults over 60, "Good dental health is critical to overall health, as well as the ability to chew foods properly." Poor oral health can lead to chronic diseases and impede one's ability to chew fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and other nutrient-rich foods across the life span. Almost 90 percent of adults ages 20 to 64 years and 96 percent of those over 65 years of age have dental caries. The overall prevalence of complete tooth loss is 2.2 percent among adults ages 20 to 64 years and jumps to 17.3 percent for those over age 65. As a result of COVID-19, some seniors are not seeking regular oral health services, which increases the need for preventive oral health practices and consuming a healthy dietary pattern recommended in the new Dietary Guidelines. Recent research will underscore the importance of saliva and oral health in cancer patients on radiation and in other chronic diseases. Saliva has also been shown to reduce specific infections that are related to influenza and HIV. Participants in this session will gain understanding of factors linking poor oral health and nutrition practices to chronic diseases and guidance on critical preventive oral health practices to increase saliva flow and decrease dental caries through all stages of the life cycle. Promoting oral health is the responsibility of the interdisciplinary team overseeing older adults.

##### MINIMIZING COMPLICATIONS OF AGING THAT LEAD TO DRY MOUTH AND POOR ORAL HEALTH

Athena Papas, *Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*

Poor oral health causes severe pain and untreated infections to spread throughout the body. For older adults, the prevalence of root decay exceeds that of any other medical condition. Our research shows tooth loss and edentulousness were associated with increased mortality and inversely associated with BMI, waist circumference, blood pressure, and fasting blood glucose. Our Stop-it study found people who lost bone density had fewer teeth, problems chewing, and involuntary weight loss and frailty. 88% of the elderly take medications that cause loss of saliva. Sjögren's and radiation therapy for head and neck cancer patients heighten risk. Without saliva, patients have increased tooth decay, periodontal disease and fungal infections, salivary gland blockage, and problems swallowing and speaking. Dry mouth leads people to suck on candy that further increase caries. Substituting sugarfree gum for candy increases salivary flow and reduces dental caries. Brushing, flossing, and limiting sugar also lessen tooth decay.