(S72) PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ADAPTATION TO NEUROLOGIC DISABILITY IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
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**Background:** Personality is reliably assessed using the Five Factor Model and has known associations with a broad range of physical/mental health outcomes. Given the relative unpredictability of symptoms and disease progression in multiple sclerosis (MS), personality may be of particular importance in terms of adaptation to illness. **Objectives:** We aimed to investigate the relationship between personality and quality of life QOL in a diverse sample of MS patients, while controlling for the effects of disease characteristics and cognitive capacity. **Methods:** Subjects were 65 MS patients roughly equivalent across demographic variables; 88% had relapsing-remitting MS and 12% had a secondary progressive course. T tests were performed to identify differences in individual personality traits (NEO Five-Factor Inventory [NEO-FFI]) in patients with poor QOL (Sickness Impact Profile Total >19) versus MS patients with good adaptation. Logistic regression was then performed to determine which personality traits optimally predicted poor quality of life in MS patients based on both patient self-report and informant report on the NEO-FFI. Cognition was assessed with the Symbol Digit Modalities Test (SDMT). **Results:** Neuroticism, extroversion, and conscientiousness on both self- and informant report significantly differed between patients with poor QOL versus other MS patients. Controlling for age, education, gender, Expanded Disability Status Scale (EDSS) score, and cognition, the only self-reported trait retained in the model predicting poor QOL was conscientiousness ($\chi^2 = 17.768, P < .01$). Controlling for the same variables, the only informant-reported trait retained in the model predicting poor QOL was neuroticism ($\chi^2 = 17.008, P < .01$). In each case low conscientiousness and high neuroticism were associated with poorer QOL. **Conclusions:** The results confirm the relationship between personality and QOL in MS above and beyond neurologic disability and cognition. Other research has revealed associations between elevated neuroticism and low conscientiousness and cognitive dysfunction and brain atrophy in MS. With a larger patient sample, future research might focus on identifying potential type differences and associated clinical outcomes in MS patients.

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