

Social Activity in Late Life Associated with Better Motor Function

August, 2009 — A new analysis from the Rush Memory and Aging Project finds that people who report less frequent participation in social activities have a more rapid rate of motor decline in old age.

"We found that the rate of motor decline you get with 1 point on the social-activity scale is equivalent to being 5 years older at baseline," Aron S. Buchman, MD, from the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center and department of neurological sciences at Rush University Medical Center, in Chicago, Illinois, told *Medscape Neurology*. "The differences in rate of decline we're talking about are not trivial."

Their findings suggest that not only physical activity but cognitive activity and now social activity are all part of an overall approach to maintaining good health into older age, Dr. Buchman said. "It gives impetus to a multidisciplinary approach from a public-health point of view, because it's certainly a lot cheaper to facilitate social activity than it is to be handing out medication."

Their results are published in the June 22 issue of *Archives of Internal Medicine*.