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Marriage Encourages Healthy Behaviors among the Elderly, Especially Men

Press Release Date: October 26, 1998

Marriage has a positive effect on the healthy behaviors of the elderly population, and that effect is larger for elderly men than for elderly women. Previous studies have shown a positive relationship between marital status and health, but a new study by researchers at the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research demonstrates that marriage continues to have positive health benefits regardless of the age of the couple. The study, published in *The Gerontologist*, focuses specifically on preventive behaviors practiced by the elderly.

The researchers, Barbara Schone, Ph.D., and Robin Weinick, Ph.D., looked at five health behaviors among the elderly and compared these behaviors for widowed and married men and women. They find that married elderly persons are more likely to eat breakfast, wear seat belts, engage in physical activity, have their blood pressure checked, and not smoke than widowed elderly persons. They also show that the benefits of marriage tend to be more substantial for elderly men than for elderly women.

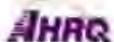
Schone and Weinick believe their research provides information that will be useful in identifying elderly people who may need the most encouragement to engage in these behaviors. In addition to marital status and gender, they find that the social and psychological circumstances of elderly people can help point out which people are least likely to adopt healthy behaviors.

The researchers analyzed data from the 1987 National Medical Expenditure Survey, now called the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS). Select for more information on [MEPS](#). The complete study, "Health-Related Behaviors and the Benefits of Marriage for Elderly Persons," is published in *The Gerontologist*, Vol. 38, No. 5, 1998, 618-627.

For additional information, contact AHCPH Press Office: Karen Carp, (301) 427-1858 (KCarp@ahrq.gov); Karen Migdail, (301) 427-1855 (KMigdail@ahrq.gov).

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA	
Case number:	3:09-cv-02292-VRW
PLTF	EXHIBIT NO. PX0807
Date admitted:	_____
By:	_____



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