

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIABETES AND DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS IN THE
SOUTHERN COMMUNITY COHORT STUDY

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Thesis under the direction of Professor David Schlundt

The goal of this study was to examine the relationship between diabetes and depressive symptoms in the Southern Community Cohort Study (SCCS). The SCCS is a prospective, community-based cohort study examining racial disparities in chronic disease in the Southeastern US. Baseline self-report data from 20,953 participants were included in these analyses. Diabetes was present in 21.1% of the cohort. Depressive symptoms were assessed using the 10-item version of the CES-D. Hierarchical linear regression was used to predict depression scores, and probable depression was analyzed using logistic regression. Demographics (age, education, income), ethnicity and smoking captured a larger percentage of the variance than the diagnosis of diabetes. After controlling for age, income, education, BMI and smoking, the relative risk of being classified as depressed in males was 1.16 for having diabetes. In females, the relative risk of being classified as depressed was 1.29 for having diabetes. This study confirms a relationship between depression and diabetes in this cohort, but the strength of the association is relatively weak. SES, smoking, and ethnicity are more important risk factors for depression than knowing you have been diagnosed with diabetes.