

Financial Woes May Lead to Physical Pain Decades Later

Adults with financial problems in midlife may experience physical pain when they become older.

April 22, 2021 By [Alicia Green](#)

[New findings](#) published in the journal *Stress & Health* by researchers at the University of Georgia showed that adults hit with financial [stress](#) in midlife experienced physical [pain](#) nearly three decades later, reports [UGA Today](#), the university's online newspaper.

For the study, researchers assessed data from 508 longtime married couples taxed with financial hardships as a result of the 1980s farm crisis. These families were followed for over 27 years; most individuals are currently older than age 65.

After controlling for concurrent health conditions, age and household earnings, researchers found a link between spouses' financial hardship in the early 1990s and their development of physical pain almost 30 years later. Scientists concluded from supplementary data that it was more likely that money problems affected bodily pain and not the reverse.

Researchers explained that monetary difficulties lead to a depleted sense of control, which affects areas of the brain susceptible to pressure and tension. This can trigger physical and mental consequences that result in pain, physical limitations, loneliness and heart disease, among other health problems.

"In their later years, many complain about memory loss, bodily pain and lack of social connections," said Kandauda A.S. Wickrama, PhD, a professor in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences and the study's first author. "Nearly two thirds of adults complain of some type of bodily pain, and nearly that many complain of loneliness."

Wickrama suggested that this situation is a public health concern because over time, the proportion of people affected will rise along with the costs of treating these health troubles.

For related coverage, read "[New Report Adds Up the Financial Burden of a Cancer Diagnosis.](#)"
