

INPLASY

Association between polypharmacy and depression in the elderly: a systematic review

INPLASY202650089

doi: 10.37766/inplasy2026.5.0089

Received: 15 May 2026

Published: 15 May 2026

Santis, N; Cechinel, C.

Corresponding author:

Naime Gimenes Abdala de Santis

naganaime@hotmail.com

Author Affiliation:

Hospital de Clínicas da
Universidade Federal do Paraná.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Support - Own resources.

Review Stage at time of this submission - The review has not yet started.

Conflicts of interest - None declared.

INPLASY registration number: INPLASY202650089

Amendments - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 15 May 2026 and was last updated on 15 May 2026.

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective “What is the association between polypharmacy and depression in the elderly?”

Condition being studied We will conduct a subgroup based on depression to show if there is an increased risk of polypharmacy in elderly individuals affected by this condition.

METHODS

Search strategy PubMed (MEDLINE)
("Aged"[Mesh] OR elderly[tiab] OR "older adults"[tiab]) AND ("Depression" [Mesh] OR "Depressive Disorder" [Mesh] OR "Major Depressive Disorder" [Mesh]) AND "Polypharmacy" [Mesh]
Embase:
(‘aged’/exp OR elderly: ti,ab OR ‘older adult’: ti,ab OR ‘older adults’: ti,ab) AND (‘Depression’/exp OR Depressive Disorder: ti,ab OR Major Depressive Disorder: ti,ab) AND ‘Polypharmacy’/exp

SciELO; Scopus; Web of Science:
(aged OR elderly OR "older adults" OR idosos OR idoso OR ancianos) AND (Depression OR Depresión OR Depressão OR Depressive Disorder OR Trastorno Depressivo OR Transtorno Depressivo) AND "Polypharmacy"

Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde
(MH:"Aged" OR elderly OR "older adults" OR idoso OR idosos OR anciano OR ancianos) AND (MH: "Depression" OR Depresión OR Depressão OR Depressive Disorder OR Trastorno Depressivo OR Transtorno Depressivo) AND "Polypharmacy".

Participant or population Older adults aged 60 years or older using polypharmacy and with depression.

Intervention Not applicable (NA).

Comparator Elderly people with and without polypharmacy.

Study designs to be included The inclusion criteria for study selection were observational studies.

Eligibility criteria Older adults aged 60 years or older, of any nationality; publications in any language, with no restriction on publication date; diagnosis of depression and polypharmacy.

Information sources The search strategy was developed using PubMed (MEDLINE), Embase, Scopus, Web of Science, Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde (including LILACS), and SciELO and controlled vocabulary MeSH, Emtree, and DeCS.

Main outcome(s) The search strategy was developed using PubMed (MEDLINE), Embase, Scopus, Web of Science, Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde (including LILACS), and SciELO and controlled vocabulary MeSH, Emtree, and DeCS.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis Newcastle-Ottawa scale.

Strategy of data synthesis Information includes authors, age, country, types of participants and the percentage of women, depression criteria, and polypharmacy. Data will independent extracted by 2 authors.

Subgroup analysis We will conduct a subgroup based on depression to show if there is an increased risk of polypharmacy in elderly individuals affected by this condition.

Sensitivity analysis We will perform a sensitivity analysis and ensure that the pooled effect size has not undergone a significant change in order to analyze whether the study results were achieved.

Country(ies) involved Brazil.

Keywords Polypharmacy, Aged, Depression.

Contributions of each author

Author 1 - Naime Gimenes Abdala de Santis.

Author 2 - Clovis Cechinel.