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**THE INFLUENCE OF MEDICATION USE ON ADOPTING
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE BEHAVIOURS, AND HEALTH-
RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OLDER ADULTS
WITH HEART TROUBLE**

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ABSTRACT

Currently, cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of death in New Zealand. The combination of non-modifiable and modifiable risk factors contributes to the disease. Medication can be used to treat modifiable risk factors to slow down the progression of cardiovascular disease. In conjunction with medication, modifiable lifestyle changes such as physical activity, non-smoking, and diet can further discourage the progression of cardiovascular disease. This exploratory study aimed to investigate if medication use influences adopting healthy lifestyle changes, and if health-related quality of life is affected. Using secondary data from the Health, Work, and Retirement Longitudinal study, a total of 406 participants with heart trouble were identified. This sample comprised of males and females aged between 49-72 years old, who completed a questionnaire about their health, work and retirement. The results of the study showed that physical activity was associated with a better quality of life and that medication use did not significantly moderate this relationship. However, significant main effects between medication use and physical activity were observed. The number of days being active decreased as the number of prescribed medications increased. Main effects between non-smoking and medication, and non-smoking and quality of life were non-significant. Cumulatively, there are mixed results of this study compared to some the literature. Due to the nature of the data used, several limitations were identified. Nevertheless, this exploratory study was useful to shed light on the idea that medication use can perhaps influence healthy lifestyle behaviours for older adults, and thus this should be explored further to ensure effective treatment plans for patients with cardiovascular disease.

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