

The course of anxiety and depressive symptoms in adolescence and associated functional and health correlate/outcome profiles during adolescence and early adulthood

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Background: A youth mental health crisis is claimed, yet few longitudinal studies track depressive and anxiety symptoms in adolescence. Our study, published in *The Lancet Psychiatry*, examined symptom trajectories from ages 10 to 18 and found symptoms were highly prevalent (74% reported clinically significant symptoms), with 64% reporting a chronic course. However, the functional and health outcomes remain unclear. Adolescents face a changing psychosocial landscape and may be more likely to report symptoms for reasons other than diagnostic disorder. It is essential to establish the functional and health outcomes in this contemporary cohort.

Aims/Objectives: To examine adolescent and young adult functional and health outcomes associated with adolescent anxiety and depressive symptom trajectories.

Methods: The Child to Adult Transition Study (CATS) has annually followed 1,239 children in Victoria, Australia, since 2012. Anxiety and depressive symptom trajectories from 10 to 18 years were established (incidence, age of onset, chronicity, persistence, remission, and late onset). Adolescent (10 to 18 years) and early adulthood (10 to 21 years) functional and health outcome profiles were categorised using academic performance, school engagement, social functioning, bullying, well-being, self-harm, suicidal ideation, substance use, sleep, psychosocial adjustment, physical activity, and physical health. Ongoing analyses include regression modelling and multiple imputation.

Preliminary Results: Symptom incidence and chronicity are associated with poorer functional and health outcomes in adolescence and early adulthood. A dose-response relationship suggests greater symptom chronicity and persistence increases adverse outcomes.

Conclusions: Findings suggest that adolescent mental health symptoms have cumulative, long-term effects across multiple domains of functioning. Early prevention and intervention are essential.