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The effects of adolescent personality types on lifestyle and mortality: A longitudinal study of twins.

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ABSTRACT:

Certain MMPI personality types are related to various forms of serious psychopathology, potentially resulting in lifestyles related to earlier deaths. Specifically, MMPI factors of hypomania (Ma), schizophrenia (Sc), depression (D), and psychopathic deviate (Pd) are frequently associated with agitation, psychopathy, depression and suicidality, and risk-taking behaviors, respectively. We utilized a sample of twins who completed the MMPI in high school during the 1950's¹ and are now in their late 70's to examine whether the co-twin with higher scores on these 4 MMPI scales was more likely to die earlier than their co-twin, and whether these scales were related to risk level of occupations. MMPI data were collected when twins were in high school in the 1950's; current information regarding the professions, hobbies, and (if applicable) deaths of 66 twins were found through Whitepages and obituaries. A series of multilevel binary logistic regressions, using a score for each scale created from each twin's score minus the twin average, showed that the twin with a higher score of Pd was significantly more likely to die first, $p = .014$. There also was a significant correlation between Pd and occupation risk level, $r = .38$, $p = .041$, but there was no evidence of shared genes between these. Pd appears to be the most useful MMPI scale for measuring risk-taking behaviors and timing of death, but more obituary data are necessary in order to confirm this result.

¹Gottesman, II (1963) Heritability of personality: A demonstration. *Psychological Monographs: General and Applied*, 77(9), 1-21.