



## Prevalence of language impairment and its association with age at menopause in Colombian postmenopausal women

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### INTRODUCTION

Language is a complex function involving biological, cognitive and social aspects. Language impairment in adults is a decline in the ability to understand or express oral or written information, is a communication difficulty and is sometimes a symptom of disease or is related to normal aging.

### OBJECTIVE

To estimate the association between menopausal age and language impairment in a group of postmenopausal women

### METHODS

Cross-sectional study conducted in voluntary postmenopausal women, aged 50-75 years who fulfilled their daily activities (work or domestic) and resided in two Colombian cities, one urban (Caribbean region) and one rural (Amazon region).

Those previously diagnosed with a physical, mental or cognitive limitation, as well as those receiving neuropharmaceuticals, were excluded. They were invited to fill out a form that included the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE). Nine of the items of this tool assess aspects related to language: repeating sentences, making written and verbal order, writing sentences, naming objects and copying a geometric drawing. The score is between 0-9 and fewer points are worse evaluation. For this study, below-mean score was considered language impairment. Logistic regression was performed. Dependent variable: language impairment. Independent variable: the age ranges of the last menopause [  $\leq 48$ , 49 - 51 and  $\geq 52$  years ]  
Study with endorsement of the ethics committee.

### RESULTS

A total of 601 women were evaluated  
Age:  $60.6 \pm 7.3$  years  
Menopause age:  $49.8 \pm 3.1$  years  
Last menstruation  $\leq 48$  years: 127 (21.1%)  
Last menstruation 49 - 51 years: 313 (52.1%)  
Last menstruation  $\geq 52$  years: 161 (26.8%)  
The 53.9% lived with a sexual partner  
Number of people in the house:  $4.2 \pm 2.0$   
The average years at menopause:  $10.7 \pm 7.5$

Mean language proficiency score  
 $7.4 \pm 1.4$

Language impairment in  
287 (47.7%) women

The age ranges (y) of the last menopause	Language impairment (adjusted logistic regression)* OR [95%CI]	P
49 - 51	1	
$\leq 48$	2.01 [95%CI: 1.29-3.13]	0.001
$\geq 52$	0.82 [95%CI: 0.56-1.27]	0.42

(\*) chronological age and number of housing companions

### CONCLUSIONS

In a group of Colombian women, having menopause at age 48 or earlier was associated with a greater chance of language impairment, which was not observed when menopause occurred at age 52 or older.

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