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Relationship between Health-maintenance Preferences and Health

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Introduction

Previous Literature

- Many people are using self-medication to maintain their health (Hughes, McElnay, & Fleming, 2001).
- One self-medication practice used frequently is the administration of over-the-counter drugs (OTCs), regardless of the adverse side effects and dangers of drug interactions and overdose (Sihvo, Klaukka, Martikainen, & Hemminki, 2000).
- Another self-medication practice that is somewhat prevalent is the use of home remedies, even though this practice is surrounded by uncertainty regarding the efficacy and safety (Angell & Kassirer, 1998).

Research Question & Hypothesis

- Does one's preferred self-medication practice relate to health?
- There is a relationship between at least one of these forms of self-medication practices and health.

Methods

Participants

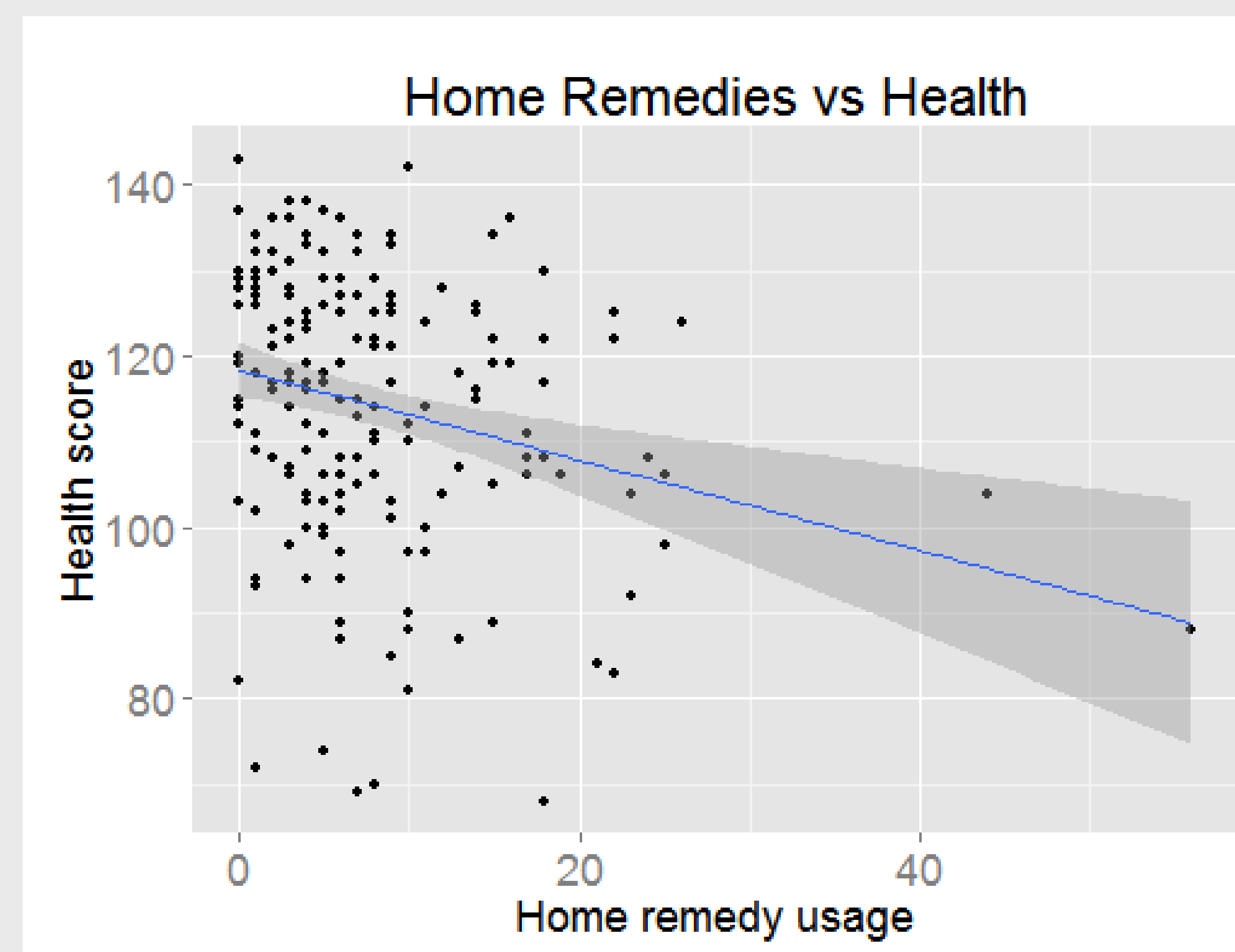
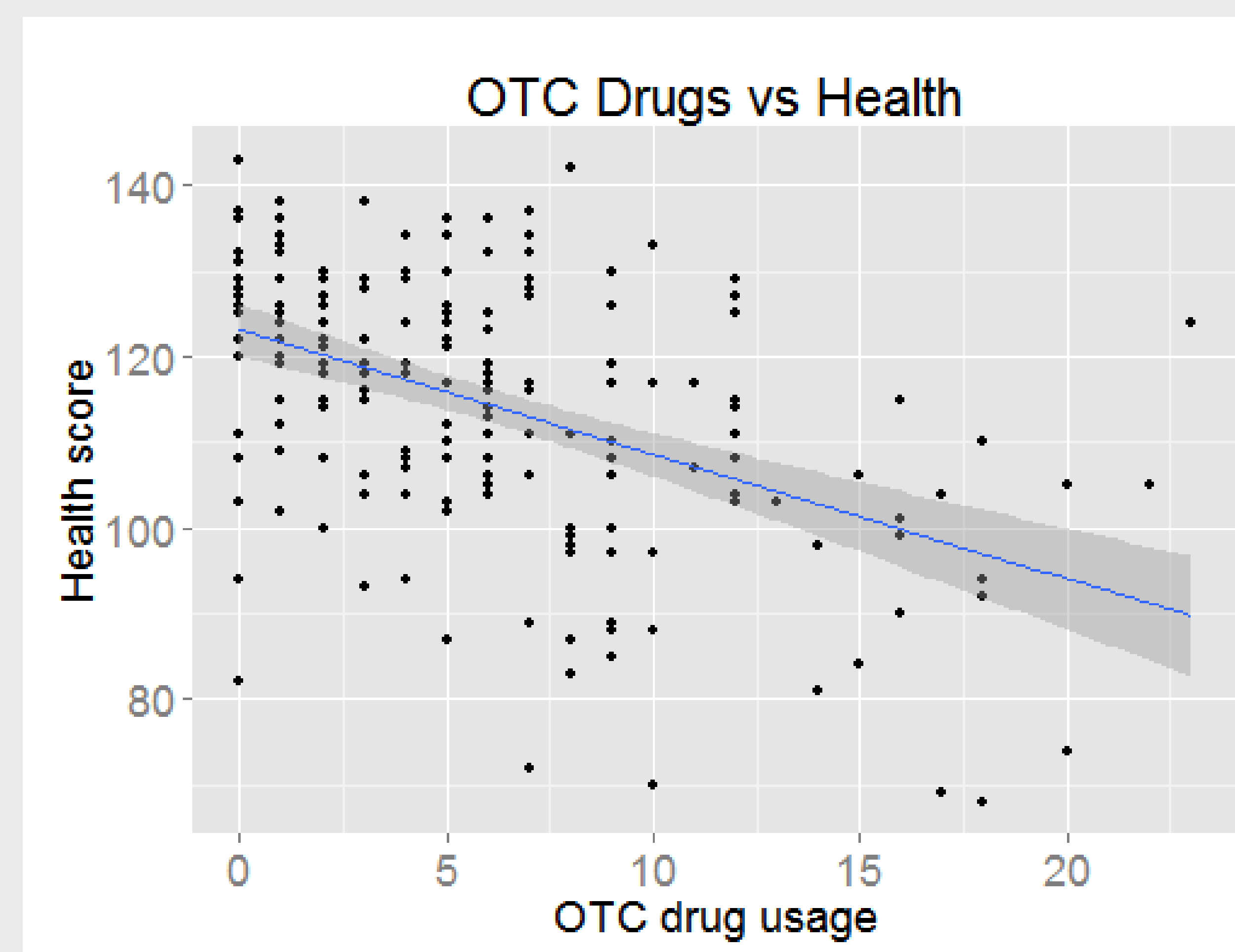
- 184 subjects (52 males, 132 females; all 18 years of age or older) recruited from the Behavioral Sciences Research Participation Pool

Research Design

- Modified Questionnaire to Document Self-Medicating Behaviours (Roulet, et al., 2012) & SF-36 Health Survey (Ware & Gandek, 1998)

Results

- Spearman rank-order correlation
- Moderate inverse relationship ($r(182) = -.45, p < .001, r^2 = .20$) between OTC drug usage and health
- There were very significant relationships between OTC drug usage and all of the health subscales.
- Weak inverse relationship ($r(182) = -.27, p < .001, r^2 = .073$) between home remedy usage and health
- There were very significant relationships between home remedy usage and social functioning, role-emotional, and mental health subscales, respectively.



SF-36 Health Subscales	OTC	Home Remedies
Physical Functioning	-.25***	-.07
Role-Physical	-.27***	-.17*
Bodily Pain	-.30***	-.16*
General Health	-.37***	-.15*
Vitality	-.35***	-.16*
Social Functioning	-.28***	-.30***
Role-Emotional	-.36***	-.30***
Mental Health	-.32***	-.23**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Discussion

Reflection on Hypothesis

- My hypothesis was supported in that this study suggests that the more OTC drugs people use to maintain their health, the less healthy they are, or vice versa

Reflections on Previous Literature

- These results might reiterate the dangers or uncertainty surrounding these self-medication practices as reflected in previous literature.
- Did not replicate relationships between drug usage and age and gender.

Limitations

- Correlational, not causal
- Most subjects were between 18 and 22 years old
- Most subjects were female
- Most subjects were undergraduates

Implication

- This may lead to changes in how doctors and pharmacists advise people to maintain their health.

Future Research

- Future research should further examine if these relationships are replicated regarding specific medications or remedies.

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