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Does Perfecting Your Day Keep the Doctor Away?: Examining the Roles of Affect and Coping in the Association Between Perfectionism and Physical Health

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Poster Presentation P56

**DOES PERFECTING YOUR DAY KEEP THE DOCTOR AWAY?:
EXAMINING THE ROLES OF AFFECT AND COPING IN THE ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN PERFECTIONISM AND PHYSICAL HEALTH**

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This study tested a structural model in which the association between perfectionism and physical health is mediated by positive and negative affect and coping strategies. A sample of 119 Illinois Wesleyan undergraduate students completed two questionnaires that assess perfectionism as a multidimensional construct, the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS-H; Hewitt & Flett, 1991) and the Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (FMPS; Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1991), as well as questionnaires that assess positive and negative affect, coping strategies, physical health, and preventative and risky health behaviors. Predicted results would support a structural model in which adaptive perfectionism is related to higher levels of positive affect and more adaptive coping strategies, which in turn are related to better physical health, including the performance of more preventative health behaviors and fewer health risk behaviors. Alternatively, maladaptive perfectionism would be associated with higher levels of negative affect and maladaptive coping strategies that in turn would predict poorer physical health, including the performance of fewer preventative health behaviors and more health risk behaviors. These results would have implications for improving the immediate and long-term health of persons high in maladaptive perfectionism by prompting interventions to focus on increasing positive affect, decreasing negative affect, and improving coping strategies.