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Running Head: POSITIVE AFFECT AND MEMORY COMPLAINTS

## A Joyful Heart is Good Medicine: Positive Affect Predicts Memory Complaints

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### Abstract

**Objective:** Positive affect (PA) systematically improves cognitive performance on a wide range of cognitive tasks, but the link between PA and subjective memory complaints (SMC) is unclear. The aim of this study was to investigate the associations between PA (level and change) and SMC over a 10-year span.

**Methods:** Current data included participants who completed all measures in the Midlife in the US Study (MIDUS) (N = 2214, with age ranged 50-84 years,  $M = 62.81$ ,  $SD = 8.98$ ). The level (mean of Time 1 and Time 2) and change (Time 2 minus Time 1) of PA was examined longitudinally to determine if PA predicts SMC.

**Results:** The long-term level and change of PA predicted SMC. No age and education differences were found for the effects of PA (PA x age and PA x education) on SMC. Additional comparison analysis found high PA (+1SD) differs from low PA (-1SD) on Age, financial condition and depression, and physical activity.

**Conclusion:** This study provides longitudinal evidence that further supports PA is associated with a key cognitive aging outcome, SMC. Effective cognitive-health programs may need to pay more attention to PA intervention.

Key Words: Positive affect, subjective memory complaints, positive emotion,

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