

Seniors not scared of social media after all

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(HealthDay)—The notion that seniors shy away from social media may be off the mark.

A new study found that many [older people](#) enjoy using social technology, and it helps them combat loneliness and might even benefit their health.

The findings challenge the popular belief that seniors aren't interested in or have difficulty using social technology, such as email, instant messaging, Facebook, Twitter or Skype.

Michigan State University researcher William Chopik examined survey responses from nearly 600 older Americans, average age 68, and found that more than 95 percent were either "somewhat" or "very" satisfied with social technology, while 72 percent said they were not opposed to learning new technologies.

"Despite the attention that the digital divide has garnered in recent years, a large proportion of [older adults](#) use technology to maintain their social networks and make their lives easier," Chopik said in a university news release.

"In fact, there may be portions of the older population that use technology as often as younger adults," he added.

Chopik also found that social technology use was associated with lower levels of loneliness, which was tied to better physical and mental health. Seniors who used social technology tended to be more satisfied with life. They also had fewer symptoms of depression and fewer chronic health problems, such as [high blood pressure](#) and diabetes. But the study did not prove that [social media](#) use improved health.

The study was published online recently in the journal *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*.

More information: The Health in Aging Foundation has advice on

[internet use.](#)

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