

Cutting back on Facebook or Snapchat will make you less depressed, study says

- A study conducted by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania claims to be the first to find a direct causal link between cutting back on social media use and improvements in loneliness and depression.
- The study finds that students who limited their daily use of Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat to 10 minutes each per day experienced significant declines in depressive symptoms.

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Published 2:01 PM ET Mon, 12 Nov 2018 Updated 3:05 PM ET Mon, 12 Nov 2018



Matt McClain | The Washington Post | Getty Images

Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg

Limiting the use of [Facebook](#), Instagram and [Snapchat](#) directly leads to reductions in loneliness and depression, according to a recent study published by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania.

The study is titled "[No More FOMO: Limiting Social Media Decreases Loneliness and Depression](#)," and as part of it, researchers observed 143 undergraduate students over three weeks.

The students were split into two groups: one that continued to use social media as normal and another that was limited to using each social service to 10 minutes per day. Students sent researchers screenshots of their iPhone battery usage, which shows how many minutes are spent on each app each day, to track their usage of the apps.

The experiment found that among the group that limited its use of social media, the researchers saw significant declines in depressive symptoms.

"Not comparing my life to the lives of others had a much stronger impact than I expected, and I felt a lot more positive about myself during those weeks," one of the students said, according to the study.

Facebook could not be reached for comment. [Snap](#), the maker of Snapchat, declined to comment.

Though other studies have found correlations between social media and mental health issues, this study claims to be the first "to establish a clear

causal link between decreasing social media use, and improvements in loneliness and depression."

"It is ironic, but perhaps not surprising, that reducing social media, which promised to help us connect with others, actually helps people feel less lonely and depressed," the study reads.

