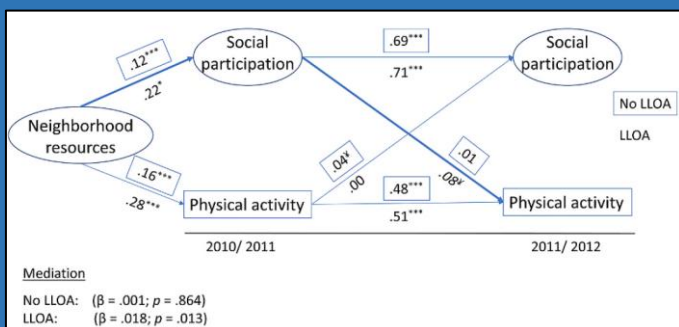


# EPOSA FACT

## Neighborhood environment, social participation, and physical activity

The physical and social environment either encourages or restricts older adults from being active outdoors. Living in a neighborhood where it is safe to walk with well-kept streets, good public transport, public facilities, and open public and green spaces has been shown to be associated with higher levels of both social and physical activity. Engaging in social activities might also promote physical activity. Reduced physical activity levels resulting from environmental barriers and social participation restrictions in older adults might be especially pronounced in those with lower limb osteoarthritis (LLOA).

We examined the predictive value for physical activity of neighborhood resources and social participation in older adults with and without LLOA, and we examined to what extent the association between neighborhood resources and physical activity can be attributed to (is mediated by) social participation.



Physical activity was more strongly positively associated with neighborhood resources and social participation in people with LLOA than in those without LLOA.

Social participation mediated the relationship between neighborhood resources and prospective physical activity only in those with LLOA (bold blue lines in figure).

### Conclusion

It is essential to recognize that older adults' physical activity results from the interrelationships between disease symptoms, the neighborhood environment, and options to participate in society. Characteristics of the neighborhood environment where people live and the opportunity to socially participate might enable people with physical limitations (e.g., those with LLOA) to continue being physically active.