

Men's facial symmetry linked to mental health

MEN with regular features are likely to be in better mental shape at the end of their lives, research has shown.

Psychologists found that men with higher levels of facial symmetry – having faces with matching left and right sides – were less prone to mental decline between the ages of 79 and 83.

The team compared reasoning and reaction-time test scores with measurements of facial symmetry in 216 men and women studied since 1932.

The results showed that facial symmetry in men – but not women – was linked to the effects of ageing on mental processes.

Women may not show the same association because of genetic differences or the fact that they live four years longer than men on average, the scientists believe.

The findings of the study, which was led by Dr Lars Penke, from Edinburgh University, are published today in the journal *Evolution and Human Behaviour*.

