The present study examined cognitive vulnerability to relapses of depression by clarifying the characteristics of “cognitive reactivity” in people with recurrent major depressive episodes. Study 1-1 and 1-2 developed a Japanese version of The Leiden Index of Depression Sensitivity-Revised (LEIDS-R), which assesses cognitive reactivity, and evaluated the reliability and validity of the scale. Study 2 examined the characteristics of cognitive reactivity which differentiate people with recurrent major depressive episodes from people with a single episode or none. The Japanese version of the LEIDS-R was shown to have reasonable reliability and validity. Participants with recurrent major depressive episodes showed more repetitive thoughts about negative issues and avoidance from internal and external aversive events when depressive mood was induced, compared to participants with only a single episode of depression. These results suggest that the characteristics of cognitive reactivity are an important consideration for preventing relapse of depression.

Keywords: recurrent major depressive disorder, cognitive reactivity, cognitive vulnerability, relapse prevention, the Leiden Index of Depression Sensitivity.