Medical Xpress

People with mild cognitive impairment may die at higher rate than people without condition

April 23 2014

Mayo Clinic research studying the relationship between death and the two types of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) suggests that people who have these conditions die at a higher rate than people without MCI. The research was released today and will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 66th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, April 26 to May 3, 2014.

For the study, 862 people with thinking problems and 1,292 with no thinking problems between the ages of 70 and 89 were followed for nearly six years. Over the course of the study, 331 of the group with MCI and 224 of the group without MCI died. Those who had either type of MCI had an 80 percent higher death rate during the study than those without MCI. People with MCI with no memory loss had more than twice the death rate during the study than those without MCI, while people with MCI with memory loss had a 68 percent higher death rate during the study than those without MCI.

"Currently there is little information about death and the types of memory loss that affect many millions of Americans," said study author Maria Vassilaki, M.D., Ph.D., neurologist with Mayo Clinic. "Exploring how memory may or may not be linked with the length of a person's life has tremendous significance as the population age."

MCI is often a precursor to Alzheimer's disease. There are two main

types of MCI. In one type, the most noticeable symptom is memory loss. In people with the other type of MCI, language, attention, decision-making and other abilities are declining, but memory is still intact.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

Citation: People with mild cognitive impairment may die at higher rate than people without condition (2014, April 23) retrieved 25 April 2024 from
https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-04-people-mild-cognitive-impairment-die.html

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