

Hypertensive kids more likely to have learning/attention problems

May 4 2009

Children who have high blood pressure are more likely to have learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) than children who are not hypertensive. They are also more likely to have a higher body mass index (BMI), an indicator of body fat.

The University of Rochester Medical Center study, which was presented in abstract form at the Pediatric Academic Society meeting today in Baltimore, shows that [children](#) with hypertension are four times as likely to have a [learning disability](#) and/or ADHD.

"Clinicians should be aware that these conditions commonly occur together," said Marc Lande, M.D., a pediatric nephrologist at the University of Rochester Medical Center and author of the abstract. "More studies investigating the potential association between hypertension and neurocognitive deficits are definitely needed."

Lande authored a paper in the *Journal of Pediatrics* earlier this year that showed children with high blood pressure are not as good at complicated, goal-directed tasks, have more working memory problems and are not as adept at planning as their peers without hypertension. If they are both hypertensive and obese, they are also more likely to have [anxiety](#) and [depression](#).

The new study followed 201 children 10 to 18 years old who were referred to specialists for high blood pressure. Of those, 100 were diagnosed with hypertension while 101 were determined to either not

have hypertension or to have white coat high blood pressure (or normal blood pressure that shoots up when nervous in an exam room). Almost 28 percent of children with hypertension had a learning disability and 20 percent had ADHD. Some of those children had both a learning disability and ADHD, so in total, 40 percent of children with hypertension had a learning disability and/or ADHD.

Dr. Lande points out, "This apparent association between hypertension and learning problems is particularly important in light of the recent increase in [hypertension](#) in children in this country that has occurred as a result of the dramatic rise in obesity."

Source: University of Rochester Medical Center ([news](#) : [web](#))

Citation: Hypertensive kids more likely to have learning/attention problems (2009, May 4)
retrieved 4 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-05-hypertensive-kids-learningattention-problems.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--