

# Vitamin D tied to women's cognitive performance

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Two new studies appearing in the [Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences](#) show that vitamin D may be a vital component for the cognitive health of women as they age.

Higher vitamin D dietary intake is associated with a lower risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, according to [research](#) conducted by a team led by Cedric Annweiler, MD, PhD, at the Angers University Hospital in France.

Similarly, investigators led by Yelena Slinin, MD, MS, at the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis [found](#) that low vitamin D levels among older women are associated with higher odds of global cognitive impairment and a higher risk of global [cognitive decline](#).

Slinin's group based its analysis on 6,257 community-dwelling older women who had vitamin D levels measured during the Study of Osteopathic Fractures and whose cognitive function was tested by the Mini-Mental State Examination and/or Trail Making Test Part B.

Very low levels of vitamin D (less than 10 [nanograms](#) per milliliter of [blood serum](#)) among older women were associated with higher odds of global [cognitive impairment](#) at baseline, and low vitamin D levels (less than 20 nanograms per milliliter) among cognitively-impaired women were associated with a higher risk of incident global cognitive decline, as measured by performance on the Mini-Mental State Examination.

Annweiler's team's findings were based on data from 498 community-dwelling women who participated in the Toulouse cohort of the Epidemiology of Osteoporosis study.

Among this population, women who developed Alzheimer's disease had lower baseline vitamin D intakes (an average of 50.3 micrograms per week) than those who developed other dementias (an average of 63.6 micrograms per week) or no dementia at all (an average of 59.0 [micrograms](#) per week).

These reports follow an [article](#) published in the *Journals of Gerontology Series A* earlier this year that found that both men who don't get enough vitamin D—either from diet, supplements, or sun exposure—may be at increased risk of developing mobility limitations and disability.

Provided by The Gerontological Society of America

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