

Obstructive lung disease linked with decline in memory and information processing

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Obstructive lung disease (OLD) has been linked with a decline in cognitive functioning, including memory and information processing.

A new study, which will be presented today (11 September 2013) at the European Respiratory Society (ERS) Annual Congress, suggests that impaired [cognitive functioning](#) could be an important factor in OLD.

Previous research has found that people with OLD, including COPD, often experience global cognitive impairments, but this new study – using the UK Biobank Resource – focused on which domain-specific cognitive functions were affected in persons with OLD.

The researchers analysed 5,764 people with OLD and 37,275 people without this condition. All participants completed a number of [cognitive tests](#) to examine cognitive functioning.

The results of the study showed that people with OLD performed significantly worse than people without this condition in memory tests, pairs matching tests and a reaction time test.

The authors concluded that people with OLD are more likely to experience [cognitive impairment](#), particularly in memory and information processing.

Lead author, Fiona Cleutjens MSc from the CIRO+, Centre of Expertise for Chronic Organ Failure in the Netherlands, said: "We know that OLD

can often exist alongside other conditions and our new study has found evidence that OLD is linked with problems with memory and information processing. This can be very debilitating, especially for someone who is already dealing with the symptoms of OLD. Our findings suggest that healthcare professionals need to be aware of the possible impact of cognitive impairment in the self-management, clinical management and [pulmonary rehabilitation](#) of OLD patients."

Provided by European Lung Foundation

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