

One-in-three older diabetic adults have impaired thinking

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Type 2 diabetes can dramatically affect the everyday thinking skills of up to one-in-three adults aged more than 60, a new study has found.

Nicole Milne, a PhD student from The University of Western Australia's School of Psychology revealed the results of her study at the World Diabetes Congress, held last week in Melbourne.

Ms Milne said baseline results from the study, funded by the Diabetes Research Foundation of WA, showed diabetics aged over 60 experienced compromised performance across a range of thinking skills.

"Participants in the study were slower to process information during timed tasks that measured their attention and memory ability, compared to other people of the same age," she said.

"Significantly slower thinking skills - at a level that would affect day-to-day functioning - were also observed in 32 percent of those in the study when they were detecting a target and 1 in 4 participants during [memory tasks](#).

"In comparison, only 7 percent of the general population are likely to complete these tasks at a similarly slowed pace so the impact of [type 2 diabetes](#) in this area is sizeable."

Ms Milne said the results also revealed the mental flexibility and higher level [thinking skills](#) of [study participants](#) were lower than expected for

their age group.

She is the recipient of the Alex Cohen Diabetes Top Up Scholarship and an Australian Postgraduate Award.

Provided by University of Western Australia

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