

New assessment tool helps predict risk of cognitive decline

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(HealthDay)—A new assessment tool may be able to predict risk of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) in older adults, according to a study published online March 18 in *Neurology*.

V. Shane Pankratz, Ph.D., from the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center in Albuquerque, and colleagues developed risk scores to predict risk of MCI. Baseline demographic and clinical variables from participants (aged 70 to 89 years at baseline in October 2004) in a longitudinal cohort were used to inform the risk models.

The researchers found that 401 of the 1,449 cognitively normal participants developed MCI (27.7 percent). An augmented model improved the C statistic of the basic model from 0.60 (0.58 for women

and 0.62 for men) to 0.70 (0.69 for women and 0.71 for men). In the augmented model, the highest versus lowest sex-specific quartiles had an approximately seven-fold higher risk of developing MCI for both men and women. Inclusion of *APOE* ϵ 4 carrier status significantly improved the model ($P = 0.002$).

"These models may be useful in identifying patients who might benefit from more expensive or invasive diagnostic testing, and can inform [clinical trial design](#)," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

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