

Predicting worsening frailty in over-40s men

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Scientists from the University of Manchester have discovered how to predict worsening frailty in men over the age of 40.

Dr Agnieszka Swiecicka, a Clinical Research Fellow says [frailty](#) in men is less likely to get worse in 4 years if they have higher levels of the anabolic hormones vitamin D, insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1) and its [binding protein](#) 3 (IGFBP3).

Also linked to a lower likelihood of frailty getting worse is higher levels of the [hormone](#) DHEA-S, but only in men older than 70, she found.

The research, published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, could allow early identification of men who are at high risk of developing or worsening frailty.

Frailty is the gradual loss of energy, strength and physical capability that can come with aging and often leads to dependency, disability and death.

Dr Swiecicka said: "Decline in muscle mass and strength are thought to be key factors in the development of frailty however, what predisposes some elderly people to become frail and not others is unclear.

"With the aging population, frailty-related problems present an increasing challenge to health care systems worldwide.

"So the discovery that certain anabolic hormones can help predict changes in frailty could have important implications in terms the

development of new treatments and prevention strategies.

"It is important to stress that clinical trials will be required to find out if supplementing these hormones to middle aged and elderly men could prevent the development of frailty."

The study examined the relationship between certain anabolic hormone levels and changes in [frailty status](#) over 4 years among men who took part in the European Male Aging Study.

With an increasingly ageing population, this study helps with understanding what may cause people to develop frailty, with a view to being able to identify individuals who may benefit from preventive treatments.

More information: Agnieszka Swiecicka et al. Non-androgenic Anabolic Hormones Predict Risk Of Frailty: European Male Ageing Study Prospective Data., *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* (2017). [DOI: 10.1210/jc.2017-00090](https://doi.org/10.1210/jc.2017-00090)

Provided by University of Manchester

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