

# 'Bugs' in the gut might predict dementia in the brain

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The makeup of bacteria and other microbes in the gut may have a direct association with dementia risk, according to preliminary research to be presented in Honolulu at the American Stroke Association's International

Stroke Conference 2019.

Researchers studying the population of bacteria and microbes in the intestines, known as [gut microbiota](#), have found these "bugs" impact risks for diseases of the heart and more. Japanese researchers studied 128 (dementia and non-dementia) patients' fecal samples and found differences in the components of gut microbiota in patients with the [memory disorder](#) suggesting that what's in the gut influences [dementia risk](#) much like other risk factors.

The analysis revealed that fecal concentrations of ammonia, indole, skatole and phenol were higher in dementia patients compared to those without dementia. But levels of Bacteroides—organisms that normally live in the intestines and can be beneficial—were lower in dementia patients.

"Although this is an observational study and we assessed a small number of the patients, the odds ratio is certainly high suggesting that gut bacteria may be a target for the prevention of dementia," said Naoki Saji, M.D., Ph.D., study author and vice director of the Center for Comprehensive Care and Research on Memory Disorders, National Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology in Japan.

Provided by American Heart Association

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