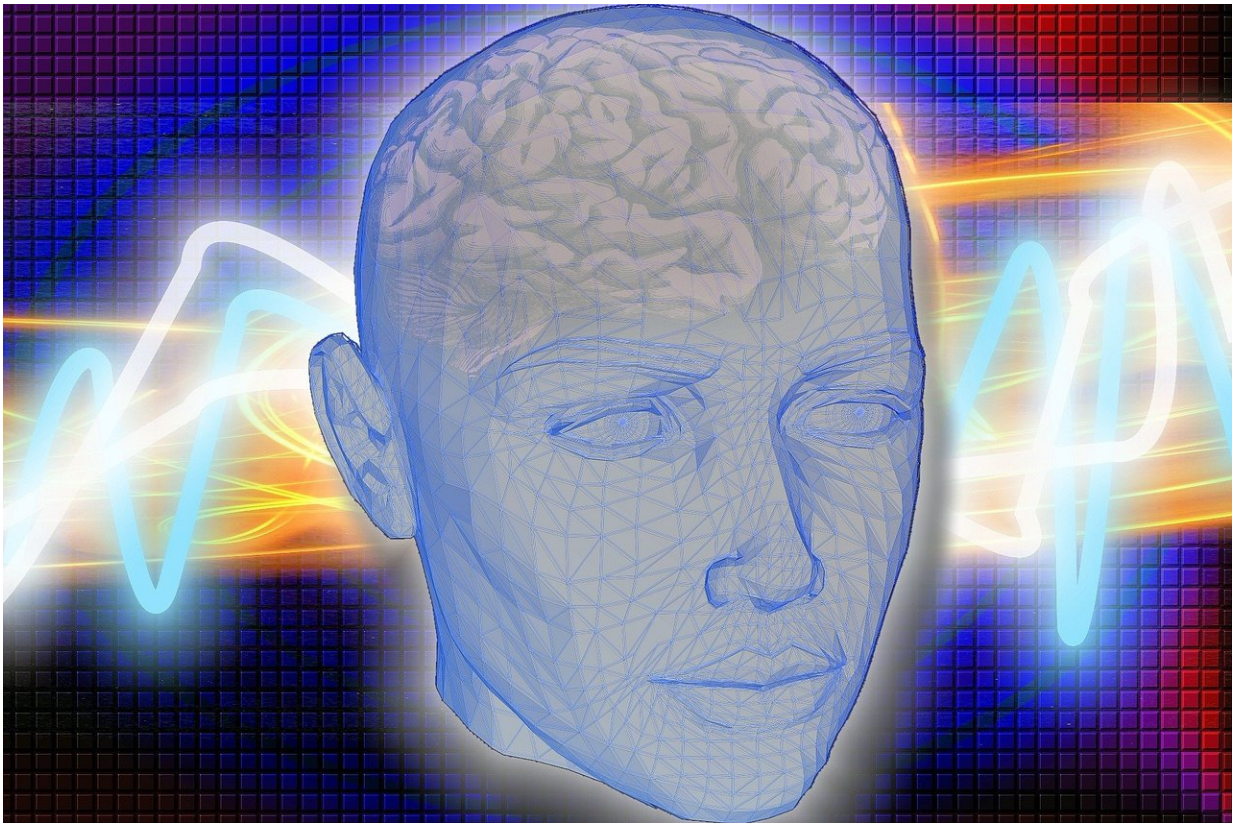


# Persons with Alzheimer's disease have a higher risk of head injuries

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Persons with Alzheimer's disease have approximately 30 percent higher risk of head injuries, and 50 percent higher risk of traumatic brain injuries than persons without Alzheimer's disease, a recent study from

University of Eastern Finland shows. The results were published in *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

This is the first study that has assessed the incidence of head and traumatic brain injuries among persons with Alzheimer's disease. Falls are the most common cause of head injuries in [older adults](#), and persons with Alzheimer's disease are known to have a higher risk of falling. The findings of this study highlight the importance of fall prevention, as head injuries can shorten the life expectancy and deteriorate a person's functional capacity. For persons with Alzheimer disease, [head injuries](#) may lead to the loss of activities of daily living and independence, and to the need of residential care even at early stages of the disease.

This study was conducted in the nationwide register-based MEDALZ cohort which included all community-dwelling persons who received an Alzheimer's disease diagnosis in Finland 2005-2011. From the overall cohort, 67,172 persons without a previous head injury were selected to the study. For comparison purposes, a matching person with neither Alzheimer's disease nor a previous head injury was identified with respect to age, sex and university hospital district.

**More information:** Sarianna Ilmaniemi et al. Incidence of head injury and traumatic brain injury among people with Alzheimer's disease, *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* (2019). [DOI: 10.1136/jech-2018-211960](#)

Provided by University of Eastern Finland

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