

# Study identifies potential risk factors for cognitive decline in older adults

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In older adults with abdominal obesity (excess belly fat), sustained elevations of blood sugar were linked to a higher likelihood of experiencing cognitive decline. In older adults without abdominal obesity, the hormone adiponectin appeared to be a likely risk factor for cognitive decline.

The study, which is published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, included 478 individuals aged 65 years or older who were examined annually for 10 years, with funding from the National Institute on Aging.

The findings—which were only observed among those younger than 87 to 88 years old—may eventually point to different strategies for preventing [cognitive decline](#) in different groups of [older adults](#).

"This was population-level research, and the next steps should be in-depth clinical and [laboratory studies](#) to fully understand the biological mechanisms underlying the associations that we observed," said lead author Mary Ganguli, MD, MPH, of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

**More information:** Mary Ganguli et al, Aging, Diabetes, Obesity, and Cognitive Decline: A Population-Based Study, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2020). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.16321](https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.16321)

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