

BP levels influence racial differences in cognitive decline

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(HealthDay)—Black individuals' higher cumulative blood pressure (BP)

levels may influence racial differences in cognitive decline, according to a study published online April 13 in *JAMA Neurology*.

Deborah A. Levine, M.D., M.P.H., from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues examined whether cumulative BP levels explain [racial differences](#) in [cognitive decline](#) in a study using individual participant data from five cohorts. Data were included for 19,378 individuals (55.3 percent female; 80.1 percent white) who were free of stroke and dementia and had longitudinal BP, cognitive, and covariate data available.

The researchers found that [black individuals](#) had significantly faster declines in global cognition and memory than [white individuals](#) (−0.03 and −0.08 points per year faster, respectively), but significantly slower declines in executive function (0.09 points per year slower). There was a correlation noted for time-dependent cumulative mean systolic BP level with significantly faster declines in global cognition, memory, and executive function (−0.018, −0.028, and −0.01 points per year faster per 10 mm Hg increase, respectively). Differences between black and white individuals in cognitive slopes were attenuated for global cognition and memory, but not for executive function, after adjustment for cumulative mean systolic BP.

"Our results suggest that effective interventions to improve BP control in black individuals may also be strategies to reduce racial disparities in cognitive decline," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to UpToDate.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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