

Co-occurring visual impairment, dementia heighten disability risk

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(HealthDay)—Older adults with both dementia and self-reported visual

impairment (VI) may be at higher risk for disability than adults with only one of these conditions, according to a study published online May 14 in *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

Nish Patel, from the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, and colleagues used data from 7,124 participants in the 2015 National Health and Aging Trends Study (55.3 percent female and 56.1 percent ages 65 to 74 years old) to evaluate the association of co-occurring [dementia](#) and self-reported VI with daily functioning.

The researchers found that self-reported VI was present in 8.6 percent of participants, while 8.3 percent had possible dementia and 6.3 percent had probable dementia. There was an association between self-reported VI and an expected decrease in mobility score of 14.7 percent, self-care score of 9.5 percent, and household activity score of 15.2 percent. Probable dementia was associated with expected decreases of 27.8, 22.9, and 34.7 percent, respectively. When combining probable dementia and self-reported VI, there was an expected decrease in mobility score of 50.1 percent, self-care score of 42.4 percent, and household activity score of 52.4 percent.

"These findings suggest that the growing population of [older adults](#) with both [visual impairment](#) and dementia may benefit from interventions to maximize vision and cognition and promote functioning and independence," the authors write.

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