

Excess body fat tied to lower cognitive scores in adults

February 1 2022



(HealthDay)—Both generalized and visceral adiposity are associated

with lower cognitive scores throughout midlife, according to a study published online Feb. 1 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Sonia S. Anand, M.D., Ph.D., from McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada, and colleagues used data from 9,189 participants (between 30 and 75 years of age) from the Canadian Alliance for Healthy Hearts and Minds and the Prospective Urban Rural Epidemiological-Mind studies to examine the associations of [adiposity](#) with vascular brain injury and cognitive scores.

The researchers found that vascular brain injury increased with increasing [body fat](#) percentage, with the fourth quartile value at 8.6 percent, and with increasing visceral adipose tissue (VAT), with the fourth quartile value at 7.2 percent. There was an association observed between lower cognitive scores and increasing body fat percentage, with the fourth quartile [score](#) of 70.9, and for VAT, with the fourth quartile score of 72.8. For every 1-standard deviation increase in body fat percentage (9.2 percent) or VAT (36 mL), there was a 0.8-point decrease in Digital Symbol Substitution Test scores for body fat percentage and a 0.8-point drop for VAT, when adjusting for cardiovascular risk factors and vascular brain injury. Higher percentage of [body](#) fat, but not higher VAT, was associated with lower Montreal Cognitive Assessment scores.

"Strategies to prevent or reduce adiposity may preserve cognitive function among adults," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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Citation: Excess body fat tied to lower cognitive scores in adults (2022, February 1) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-02-excess-body-fat-tied-cognitive.html>

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