

Perceived stress tied to worse cognitive impairment in older adults

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There is an independent association between perceived stress and both

prevalent and incident cognitive impairment, according to a study published online March 7 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Ambar Kulshreshtha, M.D., Ph.D., from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, and colleagues investigated the association between perceived stress and cognitive impairment in a large cohort study of 24,448 Black and White individuals ([median age](#), 64 years) participating in the Reasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke study.

The researchers found that 22.9 percent of participants reported elevated levels of stress. Higher levels of stress versus low stress were associated with higher odds of poor cognition when adjusting for sociodemographic variables, cardiovascular risk factors, and depression (adjusted odds ratio, 1.37).

In both an unadjusted analysis (odds ratio, 1.62) and when adjusting for sociodemographic variables, [cardiovascular risk factors](#), and depression (adjusted odds ratio, 1.39), the association of the change in the Perceived Stress Scale score with incident cognitive impairment was significant. Age, race, and sex did not impact results.

"This study suggests that there is an independent association between perceived stress and both prevalent and incident [cognitive impairment](#)," the authors write. "The findings suggest the need for regular screening and targeted interventions for stress among older adults."

More information: Ambar Kulshreshtha et al, Association of Stress With Cognitive Function Among Older Black and White US Adults, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.1860](#)

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