

Overeating may double risk of memory loss

12 February 2012

New research suggests that consuming between 2,100 and 6,000 calories per day may double the risk of memory loss, or mild cognitive impairment (MCI), among people age 70 and older. The study was released today and will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 64th Annual Meeting in New Orleans April 21 to April 28, 2012. MCI is the stage between normal memory loss that comes with aging and early Alzheimer's disease.

"We observed a dose-response pattern which simply means; the higher the amount of calories consumed each day, the higher the risk of MCI," said study author Yonas E. Geda, MD, MSc, with the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona and a member of the American Academy of Neurology.

The study involved 1,233 people between the ages of 70 and 89 and free of [dementia](#) residing in Olmsted County, Minn. Of those, 163 had MCI. Participants reported the amount of calories they ate or drank in a food questionnaire and were divided into three equal groups based on their daily caloric consumption. One-third of the participants consumed between 600 and 1,526 calories per day, one-third between 1,526 and 2,143 and one-third consumed between 2,143 and 6,000 [calories per day](#).

The odds of having MCI more than doubled for those in the highest calorie-consuming group compared to those in the lowest calorie-consuming group. The results were the same after adjusting for history of stroke, diabetes, amount of education, and other factors that can affect risk of memory loss. There was no significant difference in risk for the middle group.

"Cutting calories and eating foods that make up a [healthy diet](#) may be a simpler way to prevent [memory loss](#) as we age," said Geda.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

APA citation: Overeating may double risk of memory loss (2012, February 12) retrieved 18 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-02-overeating-memory-loss.html>

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