

Study finds mild cognitive impairment is more common in men

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A new Mayo Clinic study found that the prevalence of mild cognitive impairment was 1.5 times higher in men than in women. The research, part of the Mayo Clinic Study of Aging, also showed a prevalence rate of 16 percent in the population-based study of individuals aged 70-89 without dementia who live in Olmsted County, Minn. The study will be published in the September issue of *Neurology*.

A new study shows that mild cognitive impairment (MCI) may affect more men than women. The research is published in the September 7, 2010, print issue of *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

Mild cognitive impairment is a condition in which people have problems with memory or thinking beyond that explained by the normal rate of aging. The study found that MCI was 1.5 times higher in men compared to women. MCI often leads to Alzheimer's disease.

"This is the first study conducted among community-dwelling persons to find a higher prevalence of MCI in men," said study author Ronald Petersen, MD, PhD, with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. "If these results are confirmed in other studies, it may suggest that factors related to gender play a role in the disease. For example, men may experience cognitive decline earlier in life but more gradually, whereas women may transition from normal memory directly to dementia at a later age but more quickly."

For the study, 2,050 people between the ages of 70 to 89 in Olmstead County, Minn. were interviewed about their memory and their medical history and tested on their memory and thinking skills.

The study found that nearly 14 percent of participants had mild cognitive impairment, about 10 percent had dementia and 76 percent of those tested had normal memory and thinking skills. A total of 19 percent of men had mild cognitive impairment, compared to 14 percent of women.

"Our results, showing combined rates of MCI and dementia at 22 percent highlight the public health impact these conditions have and the importance of finding treatments for them," said Petersen. People in the study who had a low level of education or were never married also had a higher rate of MCI.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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