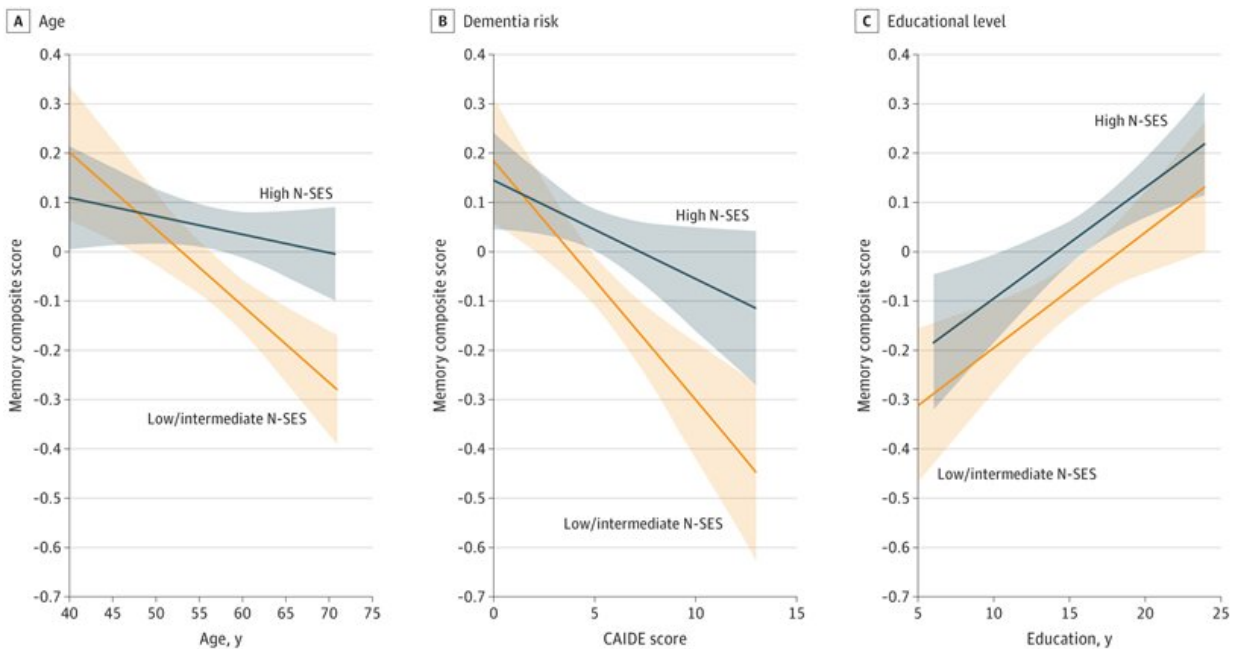


Where you live is a factor in your dementia risk

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Association Between Memory Composite Score and Increasing Age, Dementia Risk Score, and Years of Education by Neighborhood-Level Socioeconomic Status (N-SES) A, Means were adjusted for sex, years of education, race and residential location. B, Original dementia risk score from the Cardiovascular Risk Factors, Aging, and Incidence of Dementia (CAIDE) tool. Means were adjusted for race and residential location. C, Means were adjusted for age, sex, race, and residential location. The Cogstate Brief Battery memory composite score was based on composite z scores from the one card learning and one back tests. Higher scores indicate a higher number of correct responses. Neighborhood-level socioeconomic status was measured using the Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage, with deciles 1 to 7 indicating low to intermediate N-SES (n = 913) and deciles 8 to 10 indicating

high N-SES (n = 1268). Shaded areas indicate 95% CIs. Credit: *JAMA Network Open* (2022). DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.4071

A Monash University study has found people who live in more affluent areas have superior memories and a lower risk of developing dementia, highlighting the need for better facilities in disadvantaged areas to promote healthy lifestyle habits and help curtail the growing burden of dementia.

The study analyzed data collected between 2016 and 2020 from the longitudinal, population-based Healthy Brain Project from the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health incorporating 4,656 participants aged between 40 and 70 years without [dementia](#).

The study found that higher neighborhood-level [socioeconomic status](#) (n-SES) was associated with superior memory and lower dementia risk scores.

The findings are now published in *JAMA Network Open* journal.

With dementia the second leading cause of death among Australians and up to 40 percent of dementia cases potentially preventable, the study identifies that more research, resource and efforts are needed for the lower n-SES to have a preventative impact.

Lead author Associate Professor Matthew Pase says a multi-faceted approach is needed to address some of the results.

"With [healthy lifestyle](#) habits a key factor in reducing or delaying your risk of developing dementia, it is important for everyone to have access to local facilities such as gyms and public pools, [green spaces](#) and [health](#)

[care](#), but unfortunately that is not always the case," said Associate Professor Pase.

"More research is needed to better understand the barriers for people so that informed solutions can be delivered at a community level to address the inequalities."

Dementia Australia says the term dementia is used to describe the symptoms of a large group of illnesses that cause a progressive decline in a person's functioning. Dementia can happen to anybody but is more common after the age of 65 and there is no cure.

Associate Professor Pase adds: "With dementia predicted to cost Australia more than \$18.7 billion in 2025, it is important that everyone has the same opportunity to take ownership of their health."

More information: Matthew P. Pase et al, Association of Neighborhood-Level Socioeconomic Measures With Cognition and Dementia Risk in Australian Adults, *JAMA Network Open* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.4071](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.4071)

Provided by Monash University

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