

Lifestyle factors adding to risk of early-onset dementia

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Alcohol abuse, coming from a lower socio-economic background, vitamin D deficiency, loneliness and having a hearing impairment are among 15 factors that can increase the risk of early-onset dementia.

Researchers from the universities of Exeter in the UK and Maastricht in the Netherlands examined what could affect a person's predisposition to early-onset dementia, including genetic, lifestyle and environmental factors.

"Our study identified 15 lifestyle and health-related factors that were associated with young onset dementia incidence," the researchers said.

"While further exploration of these risk factors is necessary to identify potential underlying mechanisms, addressing these modifiable factors may prove effective in mitigating the risk of developing young onset dementia and can be readily integrated in current dementia prevention initiatives."

Other risk factors are smoking, prediabetes and diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and depression.

"This changes our understanding of young-onset dementia, challenging the notion that genetics are the sole cause of the condition and highlighting that a range of risk factors may be important," said lead study author Stevie Hendriks, a postdoctoral researcher in psychiatry and neuropsychology at Maastricht University.

"In addition to physical factors, mental health also plays an important role, including avoiding chronic stress, loneliness and said.

"The fact that this is also evident in young-onset dementia came as a surprise to us, and it may offer opportunities to reduce risk in this group too."

In the study, published in the journal JAMA Neurology, researchers followed 356,000 men and women aged 40 in a longitudinal health study called the UK Biobank. depression," Hendriks

Levels of blood, urine and saliva, along with weight and other health measurements were gathered, and researchers compared levels between groups who did and did not develop early dementia.

Dr Hendriks said people could take a number of actions to reduce the risk of earlyonset dementia including not smoking and maintaining a healthy diet.