TuSalud

Hypertension Linked to Faster Decrease in Brain Function

However, this does not explain the higher risk for dementia among Latinos.

September 30, 2022 By Laura Schmidt

A long-term meta-analysis has found that long-term high blood pressure contributes to faster declines in brain function.

Researchers analyzed data from six large studies that focused on the correlation between hypertension and brain function, specifically looking at declines in the ability to think, make decisions and remember information. Their results were published in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease.

In the United States, Latinos have a 50% higher overall risk for dementia compared with non-Latino individuals. Deborah Levine, MD, MPH, the study's lead author and director of the University of Michigan's Cognitive Health Services Research Program, said their findings suggest that hypertension, or high blood pressure, plays a role in the disparity.

"Since other studies have shown that people of Hispanic heritage in the United States tend to have higher rates of uncontrolled hypertension than non-Hispanic white people, due in part to worse access to care, it's vital that they get extra support to control their blood pressure even if blood pressure is only part of the picture when it comes to their higher dementia risk," Levine said. "A risk factor, like uncontrolled high blood pressure, that is more prevalent in one group can still contribute to substantial health disparities."

For this study, researchers analyzed data spanning an average of eight years on 22,095 non-Latino white adults and 2,475 Latino adults from six long-term studies. Researchers were able to trace blood pressure readings and cognitive performance test changes in Latino and non-Latino white adults.

Although overall decline in thinking and memory due to high blood pressure occurred at the same rate in both groups, in two of the observed studies, researchers saw a faster decline in overall cognitive function in the Latino group compared with the non-Latino white group.

Levine said that although the studies include data on years of education, the studies did not include full information about factors such as income, education quality, family history, lifestyle

choices and early life experiences, which may impact cognitive decline.

To learn more, browse Tu Salud's #Cognitive Function tag where you'll find headlines such as "Dance Improves Cognitive Function in Older Latinos" and "Young Adults With Heart Issues Face Risk of Cognitive Decline."

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.tusaludmag.com/article/hypertension-linked-faster-decrease-brain-function