

Hearing impairment tied to poorer physical function

July 5 2021



Hearing impairment is associated with significantly poorer physical

function and faster declines in physical function among older people over time compared with those with normal hearing, according to a study published online June 25 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Pablo Martinez-Amezcuca, M.D., Ph.D., from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, and colleagues used data from the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities study (2011 to 2019) to identify 2,956 community-dwelling [older adults](#) (mean age, 79 years) who attended study visit 6 between 2016 and 2017.

The researchers found that one-third of participants had normal hearing, 40 percent had mild hearing impairment, 23 percent had moderate hearing impairment, and 4 percent had severe hearing impairment. Hearing impairment was associated with higher odds of low physical performance scores (severe impairment versus normal hearing: odds ratio [OR] for composite physical performance, 2.51; OR for balance, 2.58; OR for gait speed, 2.11) in adjusted models. Over a maximum of 8.9 years of follow-up, participants with [hearing](#) impairment had faster declines in short physical performance battery versus participants with [normal hearing](#).

"This study's findings suggest that because [hearing impairment](#) is a prevalent but treatable condition, it may be a target for interventions to slow the decline of physical function associated with aging," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to the biotechnology industry.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)
[Editorial](#)

Copyright © 2021 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Hearing impairment tied to poorer physical function (2021, July 5) retrieved 17 January 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-07-impairment-tied-poorer-physical-function.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.