

# A healthy lifestyle almost halves the risk of dementia in people with type 2 diabetes

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A healthy lifestyle reduces the risk of dementia in those with type 2 diabetes (T2D), according to a study of hundreds of thousands of people in the U.K. being presented at the annual meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) in Stockholm, Sweden (19–23 Sept).

The study found that individuals with T2D and an unhealthy lifestyle were much more likely to develop dementia than people without T2D and a very [healthy lifestyle](#).

However, a healthy lifestyle almost halved the likelihood of people with T2D developing dementia.

An unhealthy lifestyle and T2D are known to individually raise the risk of dementia. It hasn't, been clear, however, whether a healthy lifestyle can reduce the risk of dementia in those with T2D.

To understand more, Ms. Jirapitcha Boonpor and Dr. Carlos Celis-Morales, of the University of Glasgow, and colleagues tracked almost 450,000 participants of the U.K. Biobank study for the development of dementia.

The 445,364 participants (54.6% female) had an average age of 55.6 years and were followed-up for a median of 9.1 years. All were free of dementia at the start of this period. 24,735 (5.5%) reported having T2D at the start of the study.

Participants filled in a questionnaire that covered television viewing time, [sleep duration](#), [physical activity](#), [alcohol consumption](#), smoking status and [dietary intake](#) of processed and red meat, fruit and vegetables and oily fish. Their answers were used to divide them into three groups: most healthy, moderately healthy and least healthy.

Both T2D and an unhealthy lifestyle were associated with a higher risk of dementia. Those with T2D were 33% more likely to develop dementia than those without T2D.

An [unhealthy lifestyle](#) was even more strongly associated with dementia. The participants with the least healthy lifestyles were 65% more likely to develop dementia than those with the healthiest lifestyle.

Further analysis revealed that a healthy lifestyle appears to reduce the risk of dementia in those with T2D.

Individuals with diabetes and the healthiest lifestyles were 45% less likely to develop dementia than those with diabetes and the unhealthiest lifestyles.

The researchers conclude that a healthy lifestyle can attenuate the effect of T2D on the risk of dementia.

Dr. Celis-Morales says: "Adhering to current dietary, physical activity and sleep recommendations is key to [good health](#) and it may contribute to a lower risk of dementia in people with diabetes.

"We've shown that following these healthy lifestyle guidelines also significantly reduces the increase in [risk of dementia](#) experienced by people with diabetes."

Ms. Boonpor adds: "There is no cure for dementia, to date, which makes its prevention all the more important."

Provided by Diabetologia

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