



## Diabetes and Dementia: Implications for Cognitive Health

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### DESCRIPTION

One of the mechanisms through which diabetes contributes to cognitive decline is through the formation of Advanced Glycation End Products (AGEs). These compounds can accumulate in the brain and interfere with normal cellular functions, leading to inflammation and oxidative stress, both of which are implicated in cognitive decline. Dementia is a scientific term for a range of conditions characterized by a decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. One possible explanation for this increased risk is the role of insulin in the brain. Insulin is not only essential for regulating blood sugar levels but also plays a role in brain function. Insulin resistance, a hallmark of Type 2 diabetes, can impair insulin signalling in the brain, affecting cognitive processes. Additionally, diabetes-related vascular damage can contribute to the development of vascular dementia, which occurs due to reduced blood flow to the brain. Several studies have established a link between diabetes and cognitive decline. Individuals with diabetes are at a higher risk of developing Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), a condition characterized by noticeable changes in cognitive abilities that are not severe enough to interfere with daily life. MCI can be a precursor to more serious conditions like dementia.

However, the brain uses glucose for energy for maintaining a delicate balance of blood sugar levels which was important for optimal brain function. Chronic hyperglycemia, or high blood sugar, can lead to a range of cognitive issues. Research indicates that prolonged high blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels, including those in the brain, leading to reduced blood flow and oxygen supply. Type 2 diabetes, which is more common, occurs when the body becomes resistant to insulin or when the pancreas fails to produce enough insulin. Both types lead to elevated blood glucose levels, which can have far-reaching effects on various organs, including the brain. Among these, the impact of diabetes on cognitive health is gaining increasing attention. This article delves into the intricate connections between

diabetes, cognitive decline and dementia, highlighting the importance of understanding these links for better management and prevention strategies. Regular monitoring and adherence to treatment plans can help prevent the complications associated with diabetes. Adopting a healthy lifestyle can have a positive impact on both diabetes and cognitive health. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins, along with regular physical activity, can help manage blood sugar levels and reduce the risk of cognitive decline. For individuals with diabetes, regular cognitive assessments can help detect early signs of cognitive impairment. Early intervention can slow the progression of cognitive decline and improve quality of life. Since diabetes is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, managing cardiovascular health is essential. Providing education and support to individuals with diabetes and their caregivers can empower them to manage the condition effectively. Support groups and counseling can also play a key role in addressing the emotional and psychological aspects of living with diabetes.

### CONCLUSION

Recent studies are exploring the potential of novel treatments and interventions to mitigate the cognitive effects of diabetes. For instance, researchers are investigating the role of anti-inflammatory drugs and antioxidants in reducing brain inflammation and oxidative stress. Additionally, there is growing interest in the use of lifestyle interventions, such as cognitive training and mindfulness practices, to enhance cognitive resilience in individuals with diabetes. Moreover, advancements in medical technology, such as continuous glucose monitoring systems, are providing more precise and real-time data on blood sugar levels. This can help individuals with diabetes make more informed decisions about their health and potentially reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

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