# High Cholesterol Is Tied to Cognitive Decline in Men With HIV

Among a group of middle-aged men with well-treated HIV, there was also a link between cognitive decline and a gene connected to Alzheimer's.

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Middle-aged men on successful HIV treatment have a higher risk of cognitive decline if they have high cholesterol or a particular gene connected to Alzheimer's risk, aidsmap reports. Taking statins may help mitigate cholesterol's apparent effects on cognitive function.

Researchers from the MACS study conducted a study of 273 HIV-positive men and 516 HIV-negative matched control subjects.

The median age of the participants when starting the study was 51. Participants were followed for an average of about six years. The HIV-positive participants had a median CD4 count of 514 at the study's outset; 70 percent of them had a viral load below 50.

The researchers tested the participants' total cholesterol, LDL and HDL cholesterol and triglycerides; they also tested for the APOE sigma4 genotype, which is associated with Alzheimer's risk. Additionally, they gave the participants a battery of tests of their cognitive function, both at the beginning of the study and during the follow-up period.

The study's authors found that higher total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol were associated with a faster rate of cognitive decline among the HIV-positive participants. Also, having the APOE sigma4 genotype was linked to faster cognitive decline in the HIV-positive men. Taking statins dampened high cholesterol's apparent effect on cognitive decline.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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