



## **INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH**

Department of Health Research – Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
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### **Eating junk food can raise risk of bipolar disorder, depression**

February 23, 2019/Hindustan Times

Feeling depressed? It's time to cut out the unhealthy junk food from your diet as it increases the risk of psychological disorders including bipolar disorder and depression, say researchers. Junk food is not only harmful for metabolism but also increases the risk of psychological problems such as bipolar disorder and depression, irrespective of personal characteristics such as age, gender, education and marital status, according to the study, published in the International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition. High-sugar consumption was found to be linked with bipolar disorder, while fried foods or processed grains were associated with depression. "Perhaps the time has come for us to take a closer look at the role of diet in mental health because it could be that healthy diet choices contribute to mental health," said lead author Jim E Banta, Associate Professor at Loma Linda University, California. "More research is needed before we can answer definitively, but the evidence seems to be pointing in that direction," Banta added.

The findings provide "additional evidence that public policy and clinical practice should more explicitly aim to improve diet quality among those struggling with mental health". It also pointed out that "dietary interventions for people with mental illness should especially target young adults, those with less than 12 years of education, and obese individuals."

For the study, the team of researchers reviewed data from over 2, 40,000 telephone surveys conducted between 2005 and 2015.

### **Sufficient sleep cuts cardiovascular disease risk**

February 23, 2019/Hindustan Times

Getting enough sleep can help protect against cardiovascular disease by preventing the buildup of plaques in the arteries, a study has found. The research, published in the journal Nature, describes the mechanism by which insufficient sleep increases production of inflammatory white blood cells known to be major contributors to atherosclerosis. "We have discovered that sleep helps to regulate the production in the bone marrow of inflammatory cells and the health of blood vessels and that, conversely, sleep disruption breaks down control of inflammatory cell production, leading to more inflammation and more heart disease," said Filip Swirski, from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the US.

"We also have identified how a hormone in the brain known to control wakefulness controls processes in the bone marrow and protects against cardiovascular disease," said Swirski. To investigate how insufficient sleep increases atherosclerosis, Swirski's team subjected mice genetically programmed to develop atherosclerosis to repeated interruptions of their sleep, similar to the experience of someone constantly waking up because of noise or discomfort.

While there were no changes in weight, cholesterol levels or glucose tolerance in the sleep-deprived mice, compared to animals from the same strain allowed to sleep normally, those subjected to sleep fragmentation developed larger arterial plaques and had higher levels of monocytes and neutrophils -- inflammatory cells that contribute to atherosclerosis -- in their blood vessels.

## **Consuming garlic, onions may lower colorectal cancer risk: Study**

February 23, 2019/The Indian Express



Consumption of allium vegetables — which include garlic, leeks, and onions — may reduce the risk of developing colorectal cancer, a study claims. Colorectal cancer is the cancer of the colon or rectum, located at the digestive tract's lower end. It is the second and third leading cause of cancer deaths in women and men, respectively. The study, published in the Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Oncology, found that the odds of having colorectal cancer were 79 per cent lower in adults who consumed high amounts of allium vegetable compared with those who consumed low amounts.

“It is worth noting that in our research, there seems to be a trend: the greater the amount of allium vegetables, the better the protection,” said Zhi Li, from the First Hospital of China Medical University. “In general, the present findings shed light on the primary prevention of colorectal cancer through lifestyle intervention, which deserves further in-depth explorations,” Li said in a statement. In the study, 833 patients of colorectal cancer were matched to 833 healthy controls by age, sex and residence area. Demographic and dietary information was collected via face-to-face interviews using a validated food frequency questionnaire.

## **Suffering from high blood pressure? This one drink can help**

February 24, 2019/The Times of India

One in three Indians suffers from the problem of hypertension. The stress of work, daily life can easily get to your head and before you know, the constant headaches turn into a blood pressure problem. Suffering from high blood pressure can take a toll on your schedules and limit you. No wonder, it is often called as a silent killer since there aren't any signs that can help you control the disease in its early days. While we know the one big culprit which disrupts normal blood pressure, salt, there is no one easy way of controlling it and keeping the blood pressure levels regulated. Hence, many turn to medications which are not exactly welcome. But, there is one safe and easy solution in hand which can curb the stress and keep you healthy as well. Wondering what is it?

Hint: It is really simple and tastes delicious! Turn to pomegranate if you want to lower your B.P. levels down. According to a study conducted in the UK, drinking a glass full of pomegranate juice every day can drastically lower your systolic readings. The study surveyed an undisclosed number of people who were given 500 ml of pomegranate juice every day for four weeks and after the time passed, they reported a sharp fall in their blood pressure levels. They also recorded a fall in their weight levels and felt less bloated than usual. Pomegranate contains a high dosage of Vitamin C, antioxidants like polyphenols (which is present in much higher quantity than in any other fruit) and lipoproteins which act as healers for the body. Pomegranate cuts down on the cholesterol levels and reduces the thickness of vital carotid arteries which act in reducing the blood pressure. It is not just a wonder-fruit for people who suffer from iron deficiency but can also balance your blood pressure readings. It also contains healthy potassium, sodium and folate, which keep your heart healthy and boost your immunity. The antioxidants present in pomegranate are three times higher than a glass of wine or green tea so it is also a good option for those who are looking to cut back on these drinks.

## **'Scheduled Tribes most affected by leprosy in Gujarat'**

February 24, 2018/The Indian Express



Gujarat's Scheduled Tribe population is disproportionately afflicted with leprosy, but camps held to ascertain the incidence of the disease in the population have not recorded data specific to the marginalised community, for fear of being discriminatory. A leprosy case detection campaign (LCDC), conducted from February 4 to February 22, found that there has been a substantial decrease in the total number of new cases of leprosy infections in the state. The number fell from 1,219 cases in 12 districts, where the disease is highly prevalent, in August to 717 cases in nine highly endemic districts in February. However, numbers specific to the Scheduled Tribes are unavailable for this year. They were last recorded in 2016-17, when it was found that 64.8 per cent of leprosy affected people were from the Scheduled Tribes. The figure had gone up from 63.91 per cent in 2015-16, and is way higher than the national average of 18.8 per cent in 2016-17 and 18.79 per cent in 2015-16. The cause for such high incidence in the population: the bacteria responsible for causing leprosy survives in humid and cold temperatures of the hilly regions of the state, where tribal people mostly live, said State Leprosy Officer of the Commissionerate of Health Dr Girish Thaker. "These nine districts (Bharuch, Narmada, Panchmahal, Dahod, Chhota Udepur, Navsari, Valsad, Tapi and Dang where the disease is highly endemic), are either humid locations or forest areas," he said. "However, for our record-keeping, we do not demarcate Scheduled Tribe cases anymore as we believe it is discriminatory." The state has, however, made progress in reaching out to patients who might not seek treatment for fear of being stigmatised by society. The Indian Express spoke to two leprosy paramedical workers (PMW) in highly endemic districts. They said their biggest challenge was to get patients to take their medication.

## **Vitamin C may lower BP, sugar levels in diabetics**

February 25, 2019/The Tribune

Taking vitamin C supplements can help diabetics by lowering elevated blood sugar levels throughout the day, a study has found. The research, published in the journal Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism, also found that vitamin C lowered blood pressure in people with type 2 diabetes, suggesting benefits for heart health too.

According to Glenn Wadley from Deakin University in Australia, the results may help millions currently living with the health condition.

"We found that participants had a significant 36 per cent drop in the blood sugar spike after meals. This also meant that they spent almost three hours less per day living in a state of hyperglycaemia," Wadley said. "This is extremely positive news as hyperglycaemia is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease in people living with type 2 diabetes," he said. "We also found that the proportion of people with hypertension halved after taking the vitamin C capsules, with both their systolic and diastolic blood pressure levels dropping significantly," Wadley added.

The dose of vitamin C used in the study was about 10 times the normal dietary intake and readily available from most health food stores, researchers said.

"Vitamin C's antioxidant properties can help counteract the high levels of free radicals found in people with diabetes, and it's encouraging to see this benefits a number of the disease's common comorbidities, such as high blood pressure," he said.

## **New microfluidics device can detect cancer cells in blood**

February 26, 2019/Hindustan Times



Researchers have now developed a device that can isolate individual cancer cells from patient blood samples. The research was carried out by researchers from the University of Illinois Chicago and Queensland University of Technology of Australia. The microfluidics device works by separating the various cell types found in blood by their size. The device may one day enable rapid, cheap liquid biopsies to help detect cancer and develop targeted treatment plans.

The findings are reported in the journal *Microsystems & Nanoengineering*. Speaking about it, corresponding author of the study, said, "This new microfluidics chip lets us separate cancer cells from whole blood or minimally-diluted blood," adding, "While devices for detecting cancer cells circulating in the blood are becoming available, most are relatively expensive and are out of reach of many research labs or hospitals. Our device is cheap, and doesn't require much specimen preparation or dilution, making it fast and easy to use."

The ability to successfully isolate cancer cells is a crucial step in enabling liquid biopsy where cancer could be detected through a simple blood draw. This would eliminate the discomfort and cost of tissue biopsies which use needles or surgical procedures as part of cancer diagnosis. According to researchers, liquid biopsy could also be useful in tracking the efficacy of chemotherapy over the course of time, and for detecting cancer in organs difficult to access through traditional biopsy techniques, including the brain and lungs.

"Affinity separation also requires a lot of advanced purification work which size separation techniques don't need," Papautsky added. The device Papautsky and his colleagues developed capitalises on the phenomena of inertial migration and shear-induced diffusion to separate cancer cells from blood as it passes through 'microchannels' formed in plastic. " Papautsky and his colleagues 'spiked' 5-milliliter samples of healthy blood with 10 small-cell-lung cancer cells and then ran the blood through their device. They were able to recover 93 per cent of the cancer cells using the microfluidic device. Previously-developed microfluidics devices designed to separate circulating tumour cells from blood had recovery rates between 50-80%. When they ran eight samples of blood taken from patients diagnosed with non-small-cell lung cancer, they were able to separate cancer cells from six of the samples using the microfluidic device.

## **Mandatory screening, drug subsidies may cut newborn deaths due to rare diseases**

February 27, 2019/The Tribune

India could significantly reduce the deaths of newborn babies caused by rare genetic diseases by making genetic screening mandatory in government hospitals and subsidising the required drugs, experts say. While there is no formal definition for a rare disease, global health bodies say that it is characterised by three factors—the total number of people having the disease, its prevalence and non-availability of treatment. "The government is not paying much attention to the cases of rare diseases thinking it as a rare case," Manjit Singh, President of Lysosomal Storage Disorder Support Society of India (LSDSS), told PTI.

"However, there is a need for genetic testing laboratories in the every government hospitals to understand the real problem," he added. A newborn screening (NBS) test looks for various developmental, genetic, and metabolic disorders in the newborn. This allows steps to be taken before symptoms develop. Most of these

illnesses are extremely rare, but can be treated if caught early.

India currently has over 8,000 patients with rare diseases, which includes genetic disorders like rarest of rare ones such as Hunter Syndrome, Gaucher Disease and Fabry's Disease. According to the Organisation for Rare Diseases India (ORDI), there are 7,000 known rare diseases in India with a total of 70 million rare diseases patients in India. Currently, only one in 20 Indian patients get diagnosed with a rare disease. Prasanna Shirol, Founder Director of ORDI, said that almost half of rare disease patients in India are children, an important fact that often does not get highlighted enough. "We urgently need national and state policies that address the unique requirements of the rare disease community and enable them to lead lives of dignity and self-worth," Shirol told PTI. "We also need institutions like corporates, schools and colleges to create a more inclusive environment for rare disease patients," he added.

### **Colon cancer growth reduced by exercise**

February 28, 2019/Hindustan Times

A new study conducted by The University of Queensland in conjunction with the University of Waterloo, Ontario, has found that after a short session of high intensity interval training (HIIT), growth of colon cancer cells was reduced, and this also increased indicators of inflammation. The fact that exercise may play a role in reducing the growth of colon cancer cells has been published in The Journal of Physiology. For a long time, the focus on exercise has been on the positive changes in the body that occur following a longer period of training. However, these findings suggest that the effects following a single session of HIIT, an exercise regime involving short, high energy bursts are also important. According to the study, the changes following HIIT suggest that repeated exposure to the acute effects of exercise may contribute to the fight against the cancer. These results reinforce the importance of doing regular exercise and maintaining a physically active lifestyle. The study involved colorectal cancer survivors completing either a single session of HIIT or 12 sessions over 4 weeks. Their blood samples were collected and were then analysed to study the growth of colon cancer cells. According to researchers, this suggests that a physically active lifestyle may be important in tackling human colorectal tumours. They would now like to look at how these changes in growth occur and understand the mechanisms by which biomarkers in the blood can impact cell growth.

### **Cabinet approves financial support for Tertiary Care Programmes for non-communicable diseases and e-Health**

February 28, 2019/PIB Delhi

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval for continuation of implementation of the following Tertiary healthcare programmes for non-communicable diseases and E-Health upto 2020 with an outlay of Rs.2551.15 crore:

- a) Strengthening of Tertiary Care Cancer facilities Scheme
- b) National Program for Health Care of the Elderly
- c) National Program for Prevention & Management of Trauma and Burn Injuries
- d) National Program for Tobacco Control and Drug Addiction Treatment

- e) National Mental Health Program
- f) National Program for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment
- g) Program for Strengthening of e-Health and Telemedicine Services

**Impact:**

The focus under these Programs is:-

- to create required infrastructure at tertiary level for these Programs, creation of Centre of Excellences which shall serve as Institutes to set standards and undertake research in these fields besides
- to help in creation of trained manpower in these Programs for the country.

**Benefits:**

Under these programmes, Tertiary care treatment will be further strengthened to meet the ever increasing patient load.

**Employment Generation:**

The Programs are aimed at strengthening of tertiary level healthcare facilities for treatment through capacity building in terms of both infrastructure and human resources. There would be considerable direct and indirect employment generation both for technical and non-technical professionals in the country.

**Objectives:**

Objective of the umbrella program of tertiary healthcare is to provide support for creation of tertiary care health facilities in the areas of cancer diagnosis & treatment, care for the elderly, trauma and burn injuries, drug dependence, mental health and blindness & visual impairment. It also aims at digitisation of health sector.

**Details of project:**

Interventions of the Government for health care at tertiary level in the above mentioned areas are aimed at improving access to good quality and affordable healthcare facilities through support for infrastructure development, equipment, strengthening capacities of healthcare professionals engaged in delivery of services, awareness generation, etc.

A number of facilities for tertiary healthcare in the areas of cancer diagnosis & treatment, health care for the elderly, trauma and burn injuries, drug dependence, mental health, blindness and visual impairment have been approved over a period of time. Support to these facilities will be continued keeping in view the need for ensuring availability of such functional facilities in different parts of the country. In addition, setting up of four new State Cancer Institutes will also be supported. The Cabinet also approved establishment of 250 Bedded Geriatric Care and Rehabilitation Centre at PGIMER, Chandigarh.

## **Eat tomatoes to fight liver cancer, inflammation**

March 2, 2019/The Tribune



Higher consumption of tomatoes could be associated with a decreased risk of liver cancer caused by high-fat diets, a study has found.

The study, conducted on mice, showed that tomatoes are rich in lycopene—a strong antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer agent—which helps in effectively reducing fatty liver disease, inflammation and liver cancer development.

"Consuming whole foods like tomatoes and processed tomatoes from sauces, tomato paste, canned whole tomato products, ketchup and juice, provides the best source of lycopene," said Xiang-Dong Wang, Professor at Tufts University in the US.

Interestingly, we observed that tomato powder is more effective than the same dose of purified lycopene supplementation to prevent liver cancer development, said Wang. This could be due to the potential beneficial effects of other nutrients in a whole tomato, such as vitamin E, vitamin C, folate, minerals, phenolic compounds and dietary fibres.

In addition, feeding mice tomato powder increased the richness and diversity of beneficial microbiota and prevented the over-growth of some bacteria related to inflammation, said the study, published in the journal *Cancer Prevention Research*. Eating tomatoes and tomato products such as tomato sauce rich in lycopene is also associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, and certain cancers, including prostate, lung, breast and colon cancer, the study showed.

## **High-fat diet in elderly linked to heart disease, diabetes**

March 3, 2019/The Tribune

Elderly people, who consume a high-fat diet rich in Omega-6 fatty acids, could be at risk of developing health issues ranging from diabetes to heart failure, researchers, including one Indian-origin, said in a study.

The study conducted on a mice model showed that a calorie-dense, obesity-generating diet in ageing mice disrupted the composition of the gut microbiome.

Young mice, who were fed an obesity-generating diet were able to resolve inflammation after a heart attack, even though their gut microflora had already been altered by the diet.

In contrast, in aged mice fed the obesity-generating diet, the heart attack triggered nonresolving inflammation -- associated with heart failure.

The study, published in *FASEB Journal*, investigated how ageing and omega 6-enriched diet impact microflora in the gut, the structure and function of the spleen (abdominal organ), and a subsequent immune response to heart attack. The team found that obesity-generating diet increased the proportion of neutrophils in the blood of aged-mice. Higher neutrophil counts mean that you have an infection or are under a lot of stress. The obesity-generating diet in elderly also led to structural deformities in mice spleens. The spleen, a secondary immune organ, is a known reservoir for leukocytes that move to the heart to begin tissue repair and help resolve inflammation in case of an heart attack.

## **Floods linked to increased skin infections in humans**

March 4, 2019/The Tribune



Floods are associated with an increased risk of skin infections among humans, a skin expert has warned. Skin and soft tissue infections can develop when injured skin is exposed to floodwaters containing sewage, chemicals and other pollutants, HealthDay reported. In particular, natural disasters like tsunamis and hurricanes can cause major soil disruption that leads to the release of unusual infectious organisms. "The health implications for people exposed to floodwaters are staggering and include a wide variety of dermatologic (skin) issues, such as wound infections, contact dermatitis and even electrical injuries from downed power lines," said Justin Bandino, Assistant Professor at the San Antonio Military Medical Centre in the US. "In cases when malnourished patients have not had access to food and clean water, even a small, superficial cut that has been exposed to these infectious organisms can result in a potentially dangerous infection," he said. Animals and insects also pose risks to flood victims. Bites from domesticated and non-domesticated animals increase as flooding forces them to compete with people for space in dry areas, said Bandino. Further, keeping on hand a basic survival kit that includes non-perishable food and water supplies is essential to help reduce the chance of malnourishment and dehydration, which both increase the risk of infection. "Tsunamis, hurricanes, floods and other emergency situations can aggravate existing dermatologic conditions, such as eczema or psoriasis. When possible, take any medications for current skin conditions with you during an evacuation, along with other basic first-aid supplies; this can greatly reduce the opportunity for a flare," said Bandino. Also, visiting a board-certified dermatologist for skin-related problems is advisable, the expert added.

## **Delhi is the most polluted capital in the world, finds a study**

March 5, 2019/The Times of India

Pollution is the single biggest problem people the world over are facing. The pollution levels are going up every single day and the air we are breathing is just not safe. So much so, air pollution and toxic air trouble is not just limited to the winter season. It has become difficult to breathe fresh, clean air all year long. With a new report emerging, it has just added to people's woes and might just want you to pack your bags and leave the city. According to a new study conducted by Greenpeace, New Delhi has been ranked as the most polluted Capital city in the world. Not just that, 7 of the 10 cities featured in the Greenpeace rankings are from NCR. The most problematic cities on the list include Gurugram (which tops the list), Noida, Bhiwadi, Faridabad, Ghaziabad. The study also reached a startling conclusion that South Asia, as a region, suffers from the most toxic air quality in the world. The report is based on real-time air quality data collected the past year from various sources and monitors around the cities in focus. However, this study differs from the government conducted rankings, according to which, Delhi secured the 11th position on the charts.

*What makes the city so toxic to breathe?*

A big problem with Delhi's air crisis is the industrial pollutants and the number of vehicles on the road multiplying every day. They release hazardous fumes, which contain polluting particles like carbon monoxide, NO<sub>2</sub> and particulate matter (PM

2.5), which is so easy to pass through the thin layer of air and settle in your chest cavity. Hence, coughing, heavy breathing, chest congestion, sinusitis and other lung and viral infections become common in city residents. The report also listed some common pollutants causing air pollution such as industries, households, cars, fuel combustion, excessive use of old power plants and agricultural crop burning. The Greenpeace report also highlighted that air pollution is a big hit on the economy and may even cost seven millions of lives all over the world, if not tackled properly.

### **Large study again confirms MMR vaccine doesn't cause autism**

March 6, 2019/Hindustan Times

A study following more than 650,000 Danish children for over a decade has led researchers to the same conclusion as previous efforts: the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine does not increase a child's risk of autism.

The study, which followed all Danish children born between 1999 and 2010 until 2013, compared the number of vaccinated and unvaccinated kids who were diagnosed with autism, and found no difference

“We found no support for the hypothesis of increased risk for autism after MMR vaccination in a nationwide unselected population of Danish children,” researchers wrote in the US journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

The authors, from the Statens Serum Institut, the University of Copenhagen and Stand University School of Medicine, point out that their study comes to the same conclusion as a 2002 study that followed 537,000 Danish children.

And they cite 10 other studies on childhood vaccines, including six on the MMR vaccine, which also found no links between vaccination and autism.

In comparison to the hundreds of thousands of children studied for years whose data researchers say shows no link between the MMR vaccine and autism, the 1998 study that anti-vaccine proponents still often cite to claim a link included only 12 children.

### **Overweight people have better chances of survival from stroke**

March 6, 2019/Hindustan Times

While obesity has known to be a key risk factor in many diseases, a new study suggests having some extra body fat may be linked to an increased chance of surviving a stroke.

“It was noticed that carrying extra weight may play a role in survival for people who had suffered from kidney and heart disease, We felt the need to investigate whether it also was tied to improved stroke survival,” said Zuolu Liu, researcher at the University of California-Los Angeles.

The study, presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 71st annual meeting in the US, found that severely obese people were 62% less likely to die than people of normal weight.

Obese people were 46% less likely to die after a stroke and those who were overweight had 15% more chances of survival.

Conversely, underweight people were 67% more likely to die after a stroke than people of normal weight.

The condition called the obesity paradox suggests being overweight may be protective for some, such as old people or those with certain chronic diseases.

## **Fungus linked to dandruff may worsen bowel disease**

March 7, 2019/Hindustan Times

A fungus linked to dandruff in the hair may worsen intestinal disorders such as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) in patients with a certain genetic makeup, new research has found.

*Malassezia restricta* yeasts found in oily skin and scalp follicles are linked to several skin conditions. These microscopic fungi also often end up in the gut.

In particular, *M. restricta* was elevated in Crohn's patients carrying a genetic variation known as the IBD CARD9 risk allele, according to the study published in the journal *Cell Host & Microbe*.

Crohn's disease is a type of IBD that causes inflammation of the digestive tract, leading to abdominal pain, diarrhoea, fatigue, weight loss and malnutrition.

"We were surprised to find that *Malassezia restricta* was more common on intestinal tissue surfaces in Crohn's disease patients than in healthy people," said study co-author David Underhill from the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

"Further, the presence of *Malassezia* was linked to a common variation in a gene known to be important for immunity to fungi - a genetic signature more common in patients with Crohn's disease than the healthy population," Underhill said.

IBD is characterised by changes in immune responses to the intestinal microbiome. While most studies on the microbiome focus on bacteria, Underhill's team investigates the fungi's presence and its potential role in intestinal disease. Changes in intestinal fungi such as *M. restricta* - and host responses to these fungi - may be a factor in exacerbating symptoms that contribute to disease in a subset of patients with Crohn's disease, said co-author Jose Limon, a Cedars-Sinai research team member.

## **Poor cognition raises bad oral health in elderly**

March 7, 2019/Hindustan Times

Older adults with poor cognitive function are found to have impaired oral health and higher risk of tooth loss later, says a study. According to the study, there was a clear association between cognitive function and tooth loss when cognitive function score was categorised into quintiles.

The study, published in the *Community Dentistry & Oral Epidemiology*, showed people in the lowest quintile reflecting poorer cognitive function had 39% higher odds of tooth loss than those in the highest quintile.

"Our study suggested a close link between cognitive function and oral health in older adults," said Jianhua Wu, Researcher at the University of Leeds in Britain.

"The findings indicate that an improvement in cognitive function could potentially improve oral health and reduce the risk of tooth loss in the ageing population," said Wu.

The study included 4,416 adults aged 50 years and above. According to previous studies, older adults with just 10-19 teeth are at a higher risk of malnutrition in addition to higher rates of weight loss and lower appetite. They are also at increased risk for dementia and/or depression.

## **Prolonged hormone therapy linked to Alzheimer's risk: Study**

March 7, 2019/The Tribune

Long-term use of oral hormone therapy for relieving menopausal symptoms such as hot flushes and night sweats, could be associated with the risk of Alzheimer's disease, finds a new study.

Overall, the use of oral hormone therapy was associated with a nine to 17 per cent increased risk of Alzheimer's disease, whereas use of vaginal hormone therapy—transdermal treatments, such as patches, gels and creams—showed no such risk, said the study published by The BMJ.

This indicated nine to 18 additional cases of Alzheimer's disease per year will be detected in 10,000 women between 70 to 80 years of age, especially in those who had used hormone therapy for over 10 years.

Although the absolute risk is small, women should be informed of the potential risk associated with prolonged use, stressed Tomi S Mikkola, Associate Professor at the University of Helsinki in Finland.

Moreover, among women who were younger than 60 when they started on hormone therapy, the increased risk was associated with exposure for over 10 years. However, the evidence does not suggest that younger women should be concerned about using hormone therapy in the short term.

For the study, the researchers included 84,739 postmenopausal women diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease (cases) with the same number of postmenopausal women without a diagnosis (controls) to compare use of hormone therapy.

With regards,

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