

## A new study finds higher rates of newly diagnosed type 2 diabetes after infection with mild COVID-19

A new study in Diabetologia suggests a link between mild COVID-19 and type 2 diabetes diagnosis. Professors from the German Diabetes Center conducted the research.

Researchers examined electronic health records from 8.8 million adults who visited 1,171 general and internal medicine practices between March 2020 and January 2021 to back up their findings. COVID-19 was found in 35,865 people. An acute upper respiratory tract infection (AURI) (but not COVID-19) cohort (average age 43 years; 46% female) was matched for sex, age, health insurance coverage, index month of COVID-19 or AURI diagnoses, and diabetes comorbidities (obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart attack, stroke).

In patients with COVID-19 than AURI, new cases of T2D were more common. The COVID group had a 28% higher risk of type 2 diabetes than the AURI group. The researchers say that since the COVID-19 patients were only followed for about three months; further, follow-up is needed to understand whether type 2 diabetes after mild COVID-19 is temporary and can be reversed after they have fully recovered, or whether they have fully recovered it leads to a chronic condition.

# Concerning children with Autism and their social & academic development

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Autism spectrum disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder. It is not characterised by a single symptom but comes with various symptoms. Autism is characterised by severe and prevalent impairment in various important areas of development that include reciprocal social interaction, behaviour, communication and learning difficulties. Even though this disorder can adversely affect educational/social performance, autistic children can be included in mainstream educational settings, depending on the severity of their difficulties with adequate support, awareness and resources. It is evident that, despite these difficulties, many children with Autism have superior attention and perceptual ability and talent, especially in engineering, computing and mathematics.

It is apparent that they need professional help, adequate resources and support in order to develop these groups of children, socially and academically. In substance, this means the availability of things like early intervention, IEP (Individual Educational Plan), behaviour intervention therapy, a speech pathologist, occupational therapy, assistive technology,

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different pedagogy instruction and a variety of educational resources such as multisensory teaching aids, visual tools, and auditory and kinaesthetic learning aids.

Many individuals with Autism have difficulty forming letters, although they have the ability to align, size and space the letters. This can be due to weaknesses in fine and gross motor function. It is necessary to support these children with proper therapy - such



as sensory integration therapy (e.g., joint compression, hand massage) or occupational therapy - along with other games and activities such as swimming, scooting, colouring, solving puzzles, lego, sand game, play dough etc. with an adult or therapist supervision, so that they can learn how to adapt to the situation as much as possible.

Some children with Autism have been found to have a superior ability to process information visually, which is considered the best channel for them to understand, learn and remember through. Therefore, it is important for teachers/other caregivers to apply implicit communication strategies, such as giving instructions without adding extra work or expecting eye contact, breaking up sentences into smaller ones, slowly talking and giving time to respond, avoiding complicated vocabulary, and giving visual cues.

It is suggested that these social communication challenges can be

overcome or improved in various ways, such as through circles of friends, social skill programme by Maureen Aarons and Tessa Gittens (2003), talk about by Alex Kelly (2003) and the support of speech and language therapists (SLT). It is evident that social training - such as that found in Carol Gray's Social stories - Comic Strips can help many children with Asperger's improve social communication interaction.

It can be argued that, in the context of Bangladesh, social inclusion/acceptance is equally important in avoiding causing further disability. Therefore, educating neurotypical peers and other parents about children with special needs, their strengths, and challenges could help bring about the best outcome for the children with Autism and be well understood/accepted by others in the community.

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## TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

# Global health laws need to reflect evidence

STAR HEALTH DESK

During the early stages of the pandemic, governments all over the world neglected World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance and imposed travel restrictions. These public health measures imposed varying national and international travel restrictions. It was enacted for domestic political reasons without disregarding public health concern and thus divided the world. All of these undermined national efforts to prevent and respond to global health emergencies.

Travel bans imposed in response to the Omicron variant show the often-harmful effects of such decisions on low- and middle-income countries. They restricted travel to and from South Africa, in some cases targeting other Southern African countries, ignoring WHO guidance and updated evidence of variant spread well beyond the targeted countries.

The pandemic's mixed public health outcomes call into question the International Health Regulation (IHR)'s (2005) obligations in light of evolving public health knowledge. As a result, the IHR seeks to frame public health responses without disrupting international traffic.

Travel restrictions must be based on scientific principles and WHO guidance. IHR assessments need evidence to know when to restrict travel. While strengthening WHO guidance to reflect epidemiologic data, promote health equity, and support global cooperation, IHR (2005) revisions must allow flexibility in implementing evidence-based travel restrictions.

The necessity and proportionality of various travel restrictions and standards across national contexts requires more research.



## Say goodbye to brain inflammation naturally

Inflammation is a natural defence against infections, injuries, and diseases. Interestingly, you can promote your body's natural anti-inflammatory response and restore your immune system's natural balance by controlling your diet and lifestyle. Some foods can help boost immunity and fight inflammation in the brain.

A healthy brain requires omega-3 fatty acids. Generally, oily fishes contain these fatty acids but choose wild over farmed. Avocados contain monounsaturated fats that are good for the brain and heart. It also contains immune system-boosting vitamin E, protecting brain cells and keeping the immune system healthy. Cacao, the raw form of chocolate, contains brain-protecting antioxidants and anti-inflammatory flavanols.

However, spinach is a nutrient-dense food that has been shown to improve brain health and slow the ageing process. Kale and leafy cabbage are also high in vitamin K and fight brain inflammation. Nuts are high in antioxidants, and vitamin E.

Dementia and other brain inflammation-related conditions like Alzheimer's have been linked to moderate caffeine intake (not more than two cups per day). Water and daily exercise also help reduce long-term brain inflammation. Exercise improves blood flow to the brain and keeps it hydrated.

Rest and stress management are also important for a healthy immune system. Bite off a manageable bit and enhance your capacity to make and maintain changes.

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# Health span increasing even for people with common chronic conditions

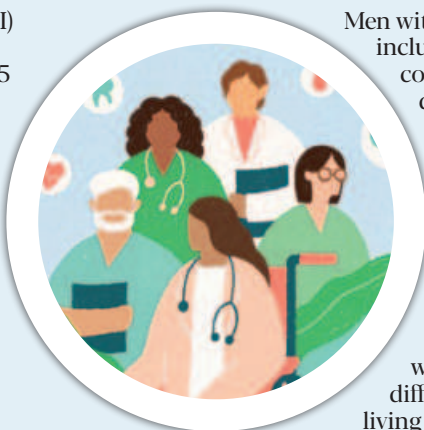
The number of healthy years a person lives is, on average, increasing even for people with common chronic conditions, according to a new study published recently in PLOS Medicine by Holly Bennett of Newcastle University, UK, and colleagues.

Over recent decades, there have been advances in healthcare that mean many people with chronic health conditions are living longer. Researchers wanted to determine whether this extension to life involves an increase in years with or without disability in the new study.

The team analysed data from two large population-based studies of people aged 65 or over in England. The cognitive function and ageing

studies (CFAS I and II) involved baseline interviews with 7,635 people in 1991-1993 and with 7,762 people in 2008-2011, with two years of follow-up in each case.

For healthy people and those with health conditions, the average years of disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) increased from 1991 to 2011. Overall, men gained 4.6 years in life expectancy and 3.7 years in DFLE.



Men with conditions including arthritis, coronary heart disease, stroke and diabetes gained more years in DFLE than years with a disability. The greatest improvements in DFLE in men were seen for those with respiratory difficulties and those living post-stroke.

Between 1991 and 2011, women experienced an increase in life expectancy at age 65 years of 2.1

years and an increase in DFLE of 2.0 years. Like men, most life expectancy improvements for women with long-term conditions were in disability-free years.

However, women with cognitive impairment experienced an increase in life expectancy with disability (1.6 years) without any improvement in DFLE. Men with cognitive impairment experienced only a small increase in DFLE (1.4 years) with an increase in life expectancy with a disability comparable in magnitude (1.4 years).

Therefore, at age 65, the percentage of remaining years of life spent disability-free decreased for men with cognitive impairment and women with cognitive impairment.



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