

Loneliness associated with double the risk of developing diabetes

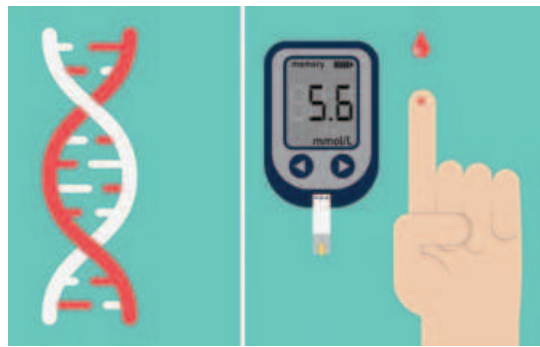
A new study published in Diabetologia (the journal of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes [EASD]) finds that feelings of loneliness are linked to a significantly higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes (T2D).

The research was conducted by Associate Professor Roger E. Henriksen and his colleagues at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. As well as examining the association between loneliness and the risk of developing T2D, it looked at whether depression and insomnia play a role.

A growing body of research has pointed to a link between psychological stress and an individual's risk of developing T2D. Loneliness creates a chronic and sometimes long-lasting state of distress which may activate the body's physiological stress response. While the exact mechanisms are not fully understood, this response is believed to play a central role in the development of T2D through mechanisms such as temporary insulin resistance brought on by elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

This process also involves changes in the regulation of eating behaviour by the brain, causing an increased appetite for carbohydrates and subsequent elevated blood sugar levels. Previous studies have found an association between loneliness and unhealthy eating including higher consumption of sugary drinks and foods rich in sugars and fats.

The study found that higher levels of loneliness at baseline were strongly associated with a higher risk of T2D when measured 20 years later. After adjusting for age, sex and education level they found that participants who responded 'very much' when asked whether they had felt lonely were twice as likely to develop T2D than those who did not feel lonely. Further analysis showed that this relationship was not altered by the presence of depression, sleep-onset insomnia or terminal insomnia, although the team did find evidence of a link to sleep maintenance insomnia.



Act fast on a stroke

STAR HEALTH DESK

A stroke is a medical emergency. It happens when a blood vessel in the brain bursts or, more commonly, when a blockage happens. Without treatment, cells in the brain quickly begin to die. This can cause serious disability or death. If a loved one is having stroke symptoms, seek emergency medical support immediately.

Stroke symptoms

These may include sudden:

- Numbness or weakness of the body, especially on one side



- Vision changes in one or both eyes, or trouble swallowing
- Severe headache with an unknown cause
- Problems with dizziness, walking, or balance
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding others

Think FAST

The FAST test helps spot symptoms. It stands for:

- Face drooping. Ask for a smile. Does one side droop?
- Arm weakness or numbness.
- Speech. Can the person repeat a simple sentence? Do they have trouble or slur words?
- Don't make delay seeking emergency medical support.

Time = Brain damage

Every second counts. Without oxygen, brain cells begin dying within minutes. Once brain tissue has died, the body parts controlled by that area won't work right. This makes stroke a top cause of long-term disability. There are clot-busting drugs that can curb brain damage, and they must be given in a short time -- usually within 3 hours of when symptoms start.



Ischemic stroke

This is the most common type of stroke: Nearly nine out of 10 fall into this category. An ischemic stroke happens when a blood clot blocks the supply of blood to or in the brain. The clot may start in that spot or travel through the blood from elsewhere in the body. Clogged arteries are a top cause.



Hemorrhagic stroke

Hemorrhagic strokes happen when a weakened blood vessel in the brain bursts. The result is bleeding inside the brain that can be hard to stop. The most common cause is high blood pressure. Other causes include aneurysms and AVMs (arteriovenous malformations), which weaken blood vessels in the brain.

'Mini-stroke' (TIA)

Transient ischemic attacks, often called "mini-strokes," are also an emergency. When they happen, blood flow is temporarily hampered in part of the brain, causing stroke-like symptoms. When the blood flows again, the symptoms stop. You can't tell at the time if it's a stroke or TIA. Having a TIA is also a warning sign,

so see your doctor if you think you've had one.

Risk factors

Your chance of having a stroke rises with age and if you have:

- Had a stroke or TIA before
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Sickle cell disease

Smoking, heavy drinking, and not being active also raise your risk.

What's on your plate?

Eating too much fat and cholesterol can cause plaque to narrow arteries. Too much salt may lead to high blood pressure. Eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fish may help lower your



stroke risk.

Lowering your risk

Find out if you have any conditions that you need to treat to help prevent a stroke. That may mean taking medicine and also boosting healthy habits, from the foods you eat to being active and not smoking. It is never too late to start.

Source: WebMD

HAVE A NICE DAY

Knowing a narcissist

DR RUBAUL MURSHED

It is interesting that it is hard to find a proper Bangla word that goes with the term 'Narcissistic', while it is such a vital topic in the world of 'personality'. This is a personality disorder that involves a pattern of self-centered, arrogant thinking and behaviour, a lack of kindness and consideration for others. They are self-centered and envy others, or believe others envy them. They believe that they are special and demand excessive admiration.

Well, sometimes we all may show some narcissistic traits, especially in cases of teenagers, as a part of their growth processes - they want attention, put their needs first, or think they are special. But most of the time, when we mature, educate ourselves and try to understand the meaning of life, most of us become sensible with others and admit our mistakes. But, this is not the case with people who have narcissistic personality disorder — they are excessively self-involved, and they disregard other people's needs and it may become harmful for society.

But what is about 'silent narcissist' or a 'covert narcissist'? As these characters often hide many of their typical signs and symptoms. They can also be destructive. They may appear to be shy and modest, but inside they are chronically envious of others, can't handle criticism, and lack kindness for others. Hidden narcissists may interrupt a conversation, may make dismissive remarks that will make some feel that their opinions do not matter.

A narcissist is actually an incredibly sad, unhappy and melancholic person and sooner or later hurts everyone who cares for them and is not able to control their behaviour. According to Social-Psychologists, people with strong narcissistic tendencies hate seeing others do well and they are chronically miserable people who desperately try to feel better by constantly managing their fragile and crooked sense of pride. These people are unable to feel genuine happiness because they lack a sense of genuine self and it is established that the 'true happiness' comes from within.

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PACE LABELLING

Food labelling should show how much physical activity is needed to burn off the calories, not only the number of calories

STAR HEALTH REPORT

New research from the UK shows that food labelling that includes the amount of physical activity needed to burn off the calories contained within it would be easier to understand than existing traffic light labelling, and would be more likely to help consumers to avoid high calorie foods. The study is by Professor Amanda Daley, Professor of Behavioural Medicine at Loughborough University, UK, and colleagues.

This so-called physical activity calorie equivalent (PACE) labelling was also found to be more popular among people aged under 65 years and those who are more physically active during a typical week, found the authors.

PACE provides another approach to nutrition labelling by providing calorie information with a meaningful interpretation of what the calorie content of the food means in terms of energy expenditure. It aims to illustrate how many minutes of physical



activity are equivalent to the calories contained in food and drinks. For example: "calories in this cake requires 90 minutes of walking to burn off." - see examples in the link below. Some mobile phone apps for nutrition already incorporate PACE information.

The authors explain that while

there is some evidence that PACE labelling may be effective in reducing calorie consumption, there is a lack of evidence about the views of the public concerning potential implementation in food settings. This new study obtained data from a nationally representative sample of adults recruited via the UK Ipsos KnowledgePanel.

More participants thought PACE was more likely to help them avoid high calorie food than traffic light labelling (44% vs 28%). Those aged 65 years and older were 40% less likely to prefer PACE over traffic light labelling compared with the youngest group (18-44 years).

There was a preference for PACE labelling to be placed on discretionary foods, for example chocolate and cakes, rather than 'every day' food items like bread, pasta, fruit and vegetables, and a preference for PACE to be displayed in fast food outlets, supermarkets, takeaway/online menus and vending machines, all locations that typically sell high energy dense food and drinks.

Genetically engineered muscle tissue being developed to treat type 2 diabetes

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Injections of genetically engineered muscle tissue hold great promise in treating type 2 diabetes (T2D), the annual meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes in Stockholm, Sweden (19-23 Sept), revealed.

T2D is the most common form of diabetes and is responsible for more than 1 million deaths a year, globally.

Insulin resistance — where the body's cells don't respond properly to insulin and can't easily take up glucose from blood, causing blood sugar levels to rise — is a key feature of T2D.

Over time, high blood sugar levels can damage the heart, eyes, feet and kidneys and shorten life expectancy by around ten years.

T2D is usually treated with oral

medication and lifestyle changes initially but most people will need insulin injections eventually.

To find a better treatment, researchers at Levenberg Lab, Technion — Israel Institute of Technology genetically engineered muscle tissue to take up greater amounts of sugar from the blood.

In previous research, the transplantation of genetically engineered muscle cells into diabetic mice improved their blood sugar levels.

In their latest research, the team used the same technique to genetically modify human muscle cells. The cells were engineered to make more insulin-activated sugar transporter (GLUT4), a protein that's known to help cells take in sugar.

The cells were then grown into 3D tissue in the lab on scaffolds —

matrices made from a biopolymer.

Tests showed that the new tissue was able to take up 50% more sugar than normal muscle tissue.

Pieces of tissue 6mm in diameter were then transplanted into diabetic mice through a small incision in the abdomen and their blood glucose levels were monitored.

The transplant resulted in a reduction in blood glucose levels of around 20%.

The team also developed a more flexible, sponge-like scaffold that could be injected using a syringe, removing the need for surgery.

The tissue grown on the new scaffold developed normally. Tests showed that injection did not cause significant damage to the tissue grown on the new scaffold and that the tissue could still take up sugar from the blood.



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