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Dentures May Lower Your Risk of Developing Dementia, Study Says

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Taking care of your teeth, ears and eyes may help prevent dementia.

A new study out of Canada found that improving and maintaining health factors that aren't traditionally associated with dementia, like denture fit, vision and hearing, may decrease a person's chances of developing dementia.

More than 7,200 dementia-free people aged 65 and older were studied by researchers at the University of Halifax.

Participants were asked about 19 health problems that were not previously linked to dementia.

They were evaluated for Alzheimer's disease and dementia at the five-year and ten-year mark, and each health problem was shown to increase a person's chances of developing dementia by 3.2 percent.

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But, those participants who had improved and maintained health factors such as arthritis, dentures, vision and hearing may have lowered their risk for dementia.

Dr. Stephen Rao, who treats dementia patients at Cleveland Clinic, said that keeping yourself healthy may be the best preventative measure.

"What this study is showing is that it may go beyond a vascular disease," he said. "And, in fact, what it's suggesting is multiple organ system breakdown may be the cause of Alzheimer's disease."

Researchers determined that further studies are needed to confirm a link between these non-traditional problems and a heightened risk for dementia.

The study's complete findings can be found in the journal "Neurology."

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