

Having an 'interesting' and mentally stimulating job cuts your risk of dementia by a third, study claims

Having an interesting job in your forties may slash your risk of getting dementia in old age, a study has suggested.

Researchers claim mental stimulation may stave off the onslaught of the memory-robbing condition by around 18 months.

Academics examined more than 100,000 participants and tracked them for nearly two decades.

They spotted a third fewer cases of dementia among people who had engaging jobs which involved demanding tasks and more control — such as solicitors and doctors, compared to adults in 'passive' roles — such as cashiers.

And those who found their own work interesting also had lower levels of proteins in their blood that have been linked with dementia.

Keeping the brain active by challenging yourself regularly likely reduces the risk of dementia by building up its ability to cope with disease, experts say.

Dementia is the second biggest killer in the UK behind heart disease, according to the UK Government agency, the Office for National Statistics.

In the US, around 5 million people have the condition. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia, causing up to 70 percent of cases.

A plethora of studies have already suggested mental stimulation could prevent or postpone the onset of dementia.

But none found that mentally demanding hobbies, which may include reading, doing puzzles or going to museums, cut the risk.

The new study looked at jobs, which the academic said involved more engagement than hobbies, which often last less than an hour.

It was carried out by researchers from University College London, the University of Helsinki and Johns Hopkins University.

They looked into the cognitive stimulation and dementia risk in 107,896 volunteers, who were regularly quizzed about their job.

Volunteers jobs included interesting roles such as government officers, directors, physicians, dentists and solicitors.

Jobs with low brain stimulation included supermarket cashiers, vehicle drivers and machine operators.

The volunteers — who had an average age of around 45 — were tracked for between 14 and 40 years.

Jobs were classed as cognitively stimulating if they included demanding tasks and came with high job control.

Non-stimulating 'passive' occupations included those with low demands and little decision-making power.

Experts spotted 4.8 cases of dementia per 10,000 person years among those with interesting jobs, equating to 0.8 percent of the group.

Meanwhile, there were 7.3 cases per 10,000 person years among those with boring careers (1.2 percent).

Among people with jobs that were in the middle of these two categories, there were 6.8 cases per 10,000 person years (1.12 percent).

The study, published in the British Medical Journal, also looked at three protein levels in the blood among another group of volunteers.

These proteins are thought to stop the brain forming new connections, increasing the risk of dementia.

People with interesting jobs had lower levels of three proteins considered to be tell-tale signs of the condition.

The researchers noted the study was only observational, meaning it cannot establish cause and that other factors could be at play.

研究：工作有趣的人痴呆风险更低

一项研究显示，四十多岁时从事有趣的工作可以大大降低老年患痴呆症的风险。

研究人员指出，脑力锻炼可以将痴呆症发作的时间推迟约 **18** 个月。

研究人员在近二十年时间内追踪调查了逾 **10** 万人。

他们发现，与收银员等被动型职业相比，律师、医生等要求高、自主性也更强的从业者患痴呆症的比例少三分之一。

另外，从事有趣工作的人血液中与痴呆症相关的蛋白质含量也更低。

专家指出，经常挑战自己来保持大脑活跃有助于提高大脑应对疾病的能力，从而降低患痴呆症的风险。

英国国家统计局的数据显示，在英国，痴呆症是仅次于心脏病的第二大杀手。

在美国，约 **500** 万人患有痴呆症，阿尔茨海默病（老年痴呆症）是最高发的痴呆症，占到了 **70%**。

已有大量研究表明，脑力锻炼可以预防或推迟痴呆症发作。

但是没有一项研究发现，阅读、猜谜或逛博物馆等对脑力要求高的爱好能降低患痴呆症的风险。

新研究针对的是对脑力要求高的工作,研究人员表示,人们在工作中从事的活动比爱好更多,后者每日占用时间通常不到一小时。

这项研究是由伦敦大学学院、赫尔辛基大学和约翰斯·霍普金斯大学的研究人员开展的。

他们定期了解 **10 万 7896** 名志愿者工作中的认知刺激情况,并分析了他们患痴呆症的风险。

志愿者的工作包括政府官员、导演、内科医生、牙医和律师等有趣的职位。

不太需要用脑的志愿者工作包括超市收银员、司机和机器操作员。

这些志愿者的平均年龄约为 **45** 岁,被追踪调查的时间从 **14** 年到 **40** 年不等。

如果一份工作包含要求高的任务并具有高度自主性,这份工作就被归类为认知刺激型。

不能刺激认知的“被动型”职业包含那些要求低、缺乏自主权的工作。

专家发现,在那些从事有趣工作的人群中,每年每 **1** 万人中有 **4.8** 例痴呆症患者,只占该群体的 **0.8%**。

与此同时,从事无趣职业的人群中,每年每 **1** 万人中有 **7.3** 例痴呆症患者,占该群体的 **1.2%**。

工作有趣程度介于这两者之间的受访者中,每年每 **1** 万人中有 **6.8** 例痴呆症患者,占该群体的 **1.12%**。

这项发表在《英国医学杂志》上的研究还观察了另一组志愿者血液中三种蛋白质的含量。

据认为,这些蛋白质可以阻止大脑建立新联系,增加患痴呆症的风险。

从事有趣工作的人大脑中与痴呆有关的这三种蛋白质的含量更低。

不过,研究人员指出,这项研究只是观察性的,这意味着不能确定工作有趣和痴呆症之间有因果关系,也不能排除其他因素的作用。