

[IMAGE]

## BMI and the Brain

By Editorial Staff

Body-mass index (BMI) seems to be perpetually trending, despite its admitted limitations. Your BMI is one variable to evaluate your weight as it relates to health risks; but it's certainly not the only one. Additionally, as a value derived from your height and weight, it's less than perfect, to say the least, as it fails to take into account how one person's body is constructed compared to another person of the same height and weight (the classic example: someone with more muscle vs. someone with less muscle).

That said, research continues to associate BMI with various health outcomes, which means it's an important consideration. The latest: research published in *JAMA Psychiatry* that links BMI (and not in the way you might think) with cognitive decline. In the study, researchers found that *low* body-mass index among seniors increased the risk of mild cognitive impairment (MCI; mental decline that falls between normal age-related memory deficits and serious dementia). The risk increases were noted as many as seven years prior to MCI diagnosis.

It's important to note that *high* BMI at midlife is also associated with subsequent mental decline (MCI and dementia), so the BMI conversation as it relates to the brain is certainly an important one. Maintaining an appropriate weight as we age (and maintaining muscle) is also significant in that it helps avoid frailty, which increases fall / fracture risk. No matter your age, it's never too early to outline a healthy-aging strategy with your doctor. You'll be glad you did.

Page printed from:

[http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=3091&no\\_paginate=true&no\\_b=true](http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=3091&no_paginate=true&no_b=true)