## Covid-19 linked to rise in Alzheimer's risk, effects equal to 4 years of ageing

The findings suggest that mild or moderate Covid-19 may accelerate biological processes that contribute to the buildup of disease-promoting amyloid in the brain.



The researchers maintained that they could not confirm if catching the SARS-CoV-2 virus directly causes these changes. (Photo: AP)

Researchers at the Imperial College London have found that people who were diagnosed with Covid-19 were more likely to have increased levels of biomarkers linked to Alzheimer's disease.

The study revealed that there were increased levels of biomarkers linked to faulty amyloid proteins, and the effects were comparable to four years of ageing with the greatest effects seen in those hospitalised with severe Covid-19.

Amyloid is a common protein with a range of functions in the body. But the buildup of an abnormal form of the protein called beta-amyloid (AÎ<sup>2</sup>), is a key component of many diseases.

The findings suggest that mild or moderate Covid-19 may accelerate biological processes that contribute to the buildup of disease-promoting amyloid in the brain.

"Our findings suggest Covid-19 may drive changes which contribute to neurodegenerative disease. We think this may be due to the inflammation triggered by the disease," Dr Eugene Duff, first author on the study said.

The researchers maintained that they could not confirm if catching the SARS-CoV-2 virus directly causes these changes. " But our findings do suggest that Covid-19 may increase <u>the</u> <u>risk of Alzheimer's in future</u> - as has been suggested in the past for other kinds of infections - especially among people with pre-existing risk factors," Dr Eugene added.

The team analysed biomarkers in 1,252 participants from the UK Biobank, aged 46 to 80 years of age, both before and after confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infections. The team then compared these biomarkers to those in participants with similar characteristics but without evidence of any prior infection.

They found SARS-CoV-2 infection was associated with changes in several blood proteins previously linked to brain AÎ<sup>2</sup> pathology. The magnitude of the changes was similar to that associated with a well-known <u>genetic risk factor for Alzheimer's</u>.

## News Source:

https://www.indiatoday.in/science/story/covid-19-linked-to-rise-in-alzheimers-risk-effects-equal-to-4-years-of-ageing-2675292-2025-02-05