Where’s My Cigarettes?

Smoking is linked to memory decline in people 50 and older.

February 28, 2013 By Kate Ferguson

As we age, it’s not uncommon for our memory, attention, language and problem solving skills to become rusty, but elderly smokers showed an increased impairment in their verbal fluency and their ability to recall tasks, according to findings reported in the journal Age and Ageing.

The study followed almost 9,000 participants, ages 50 and older, in the English Longitudinal Study of Aging. Researchers collected data in five surveys issued 1998 to 2001, 2002 to 2003, 2004 to 2005, 2006 to 2007 and 2008 to 2009. The surveys estimated associations between cardiovascular risk factors and stroke risk scores and knowledge and learning outcomes after four years and again after eight years.

Findings showed that factors such as smoking, high blood pressure and an unhealthy weight may all be associated with an accelerated and progressive decline of major cognitive functions in the elderly. But of all the factors, smoking did the most dramatic damage to thinking and learning abilities. What’s more, cognitive decline can develop into dementia. And there are other long-term effects of smoking, such as lung cancer and death.

Still want to find those misplaced cigarillos?

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/smoking-memory-loss-23555-8332