**If you went to university you’re 'more likely to get a brain tumour': Highly educated people at greater risk, experts find**

* **Highly educated people at greater risk of developing gliomas, study finds**
* **Gliomas are the most common type of brain tumour, experts say**
* **Found they were almost a quarter more likely in university-educated people**
* **Say no biological reason was found, put link down to 'detection bias' and suggest highly educated people may be more likely to go to the doctors**

By [BEN SPENCER MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT FOR THE DAILY MAIL](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/search.html?s=&authornamef=Ben+Spencer+Medical+Correspondent+For+The+Daily+Mail)

**PUBLISHED:** 23:30, 20 June 2016 | **UPDATED:** 01:36, 21 June 2016

Highly educated people are more likely to be diagnosed with a brain tumour, research suggests.

Gliomas - the most common type of brain tumour which develops in the main supporting cells in the brain called glial cells - are nearly a quarter more common among people who are university-educated, researchers said.

Experts from University College London examined data from 4.3 million people in Sweden born between 1911 and 1961.

They tracked them between 1993 and 2010 and found that 7,100 women and 5,700 men were diagnosed with brain tumours.

Researchers then examined lifestyle factors including levels of education, amount of disposable income and marital status.

Men with university level education, lasting more than three years, were 19 per cent more likely to develop a glioma than men who only had up to nine years of compulsory education, according to the study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

Among educated women, the risk was 23 per cent higher for glioma, and 16 per cent higher for meningioma - a tumour that starts in the tissues that cover and protect the brain and spinal cord.

But the researchers stressed that they had found no biological reason to explain why educated people are at higher risk.

The link, they said, is probably down to ‘detection bias’ - which means that people with higher levels of education are probably more likely to go to the doctor and receive a diagnosis.

They also found that men and women in professional and managerial roles were more likely to be diagnosed with brain tumours compared with those in manual roles.

And men with the highest levels of disposable income were 14 per cent more likely to be diagnosed than those with the lowest levels.

Single men had a lower risk of glioma than married or co-habiting men, but they had a higher risk of meningioma. These associations were not found among women.

‘This study found consistent associations between indicators of higher socioeconomic position and increased risk of glioma in both sexes,’ the authors wrote.

Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter of the statistical laboratory at the University of Cambridge, said: ‘In spite of my degrees, I find these results deeply reassuring.

‘For example, in each group of 3,000 men of the lowest educational level, we would expect five to be diagnosed with a glioma over 18 years.

‘In 3,000 men with the highest educational level, we expect six gliomas.

‘This is a classic example of where ‘big data’ can find results that are of ‘statistical’ but not of practical significance.’