**Why going to university increases risk of getting a brain tumour**

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**Highly educated people are more likely to suffer from brain tumours than those who do not progress as far in their education**

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Going to university raises your risk of getting a brain [tumour](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/tumour), experts have discovered.

Highly educated people are more likely to suffer from brain tumours than those who do not progress as far in their [education](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/education), according to a new study.

Gliomas are the most common type of brain tumour which develops in the main supporting cells in the brain called glial cells.

And researchers found they are more common among people who are university-educated. They did not establish the reason for the apparent link.

Experts at [University College London](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/university-college-london) and the Karolinska Institute, in Stockholm, Sweden, 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 a university level education were 19% more likely to develop a glioma than men without, according to the study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

Among women, the risk was 23% higher for glioma, and 16% higher for meningioma - a tumour that starts in the meninges, which are the tissues that cover and protect the brain and spinal cord.

The researchers did not find evidence that university actually causes brain tumours, merely that those who attend are more likely to develop them than people with low education levels.

Both men and women in professional and managerial roles were more likely to suffer brain tumours compared with those in manual roles.

And men with the highest levels of disposable income were 14% more likely to get a brain tumour 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 links were not found among women.

Lead author Dr Amal Khanolkar, of the University College London, said: “This study found consistent associations between indicators of higher socioeconomic position and increased risk of glioma in both sexes.”

The researchers stressed that this was an observational study so no firm conclusions could be drawn about cause and effect. They also pointed out that they were not able to glean information on potentially influential lifestyle factors.

But they emphasised that their findings were important because of the large number of people studied in the research.