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Prevalence and incidence of mild cognitive impairment across subtypes, age and sex: Data from the good aging in Skåne population study

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Mild cognitive impairment (MCI) is often considered an intermediate stage between normal cognitive functioning and dementia. Many implementations of the MCI definition exist, which leads to heterogeneous research results regarding prevalence and incidence estimates. By applying two different implementations of the MCI criteria (with focus on severity of cognitive impairment), differences in prevalence and incidence estimates across age, sex and subtypes were investigated. Participants aged 60 and over were extracted from the Swedish population study: Good Aging in Skåne (GÅS). Prevalence was calculated using 3752 participants and incidence was calculated using 6-year follow-up data from 2093 participants. MCI was defined according to the expanded Mayo Clinic criteria: cognitive complaint, objective cognitive impairment (two different criteria depending on severity of impairment), preserved functional abilities, and no dementia. Prevalence ranged from 5.13%-29.9% depending on age and severity of impairment. Incidence rates for overall MCI were 22.6 (95% confidence interval (CI): 22.5-22.7) and 8.67 (95% CI: 8.62-8.72) per 1000 person-years, for less severe and severe cognitive impairment, respectively. The highest prevalence and incidence estimates were found for non-amnestic MCI single-domain. The older age groups had the highest prevalence and no sex- or age-differences for MCI incidence were detected. This is to our knowledge the first northern European study to report incidence for all four subtypes across age and sex. Our findings concur with previous research that advocate MCI being a heterogenous concept, as prevalence and incidence estimates differed substantially depending on age, MCI subtype and severity of cognitive impairment.

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