

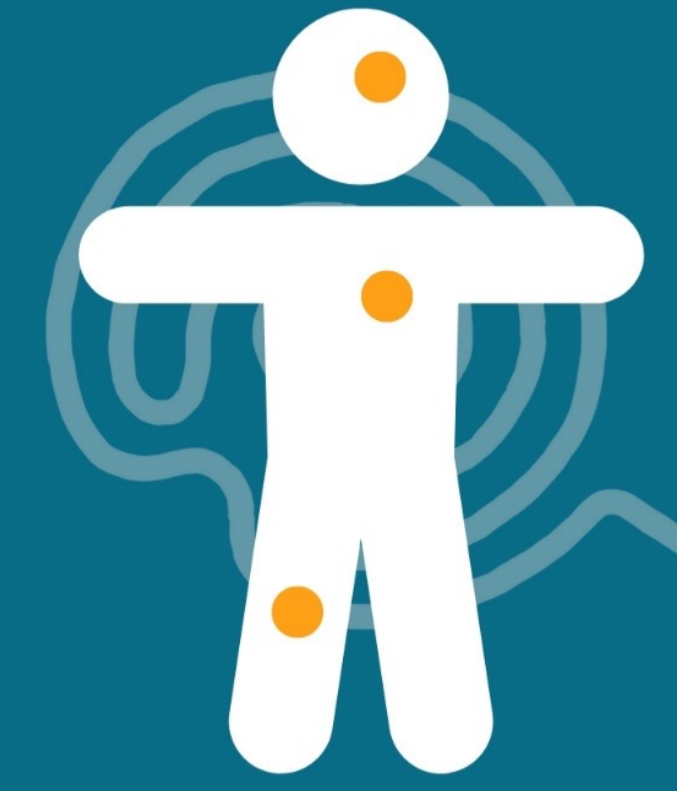
Our childhood experiences shape our entire lives

The impact of adverse childhood experiences on multimorbidity: a systematic review and meta-analysis

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INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ON MULTIMORBIDITY

**Ariadne revisited:
gains and gaps in
research and care**

Bielefeld, 3rd May 2024

Background

- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially stressful events or environments that occur before the age of 18 (e.g. abuse, neglect).
- ACEs are implicated in the aetiology of many long-term health outcomes.
- We aimed to review the evidence linking ACEs and multimorbidity.

Methods

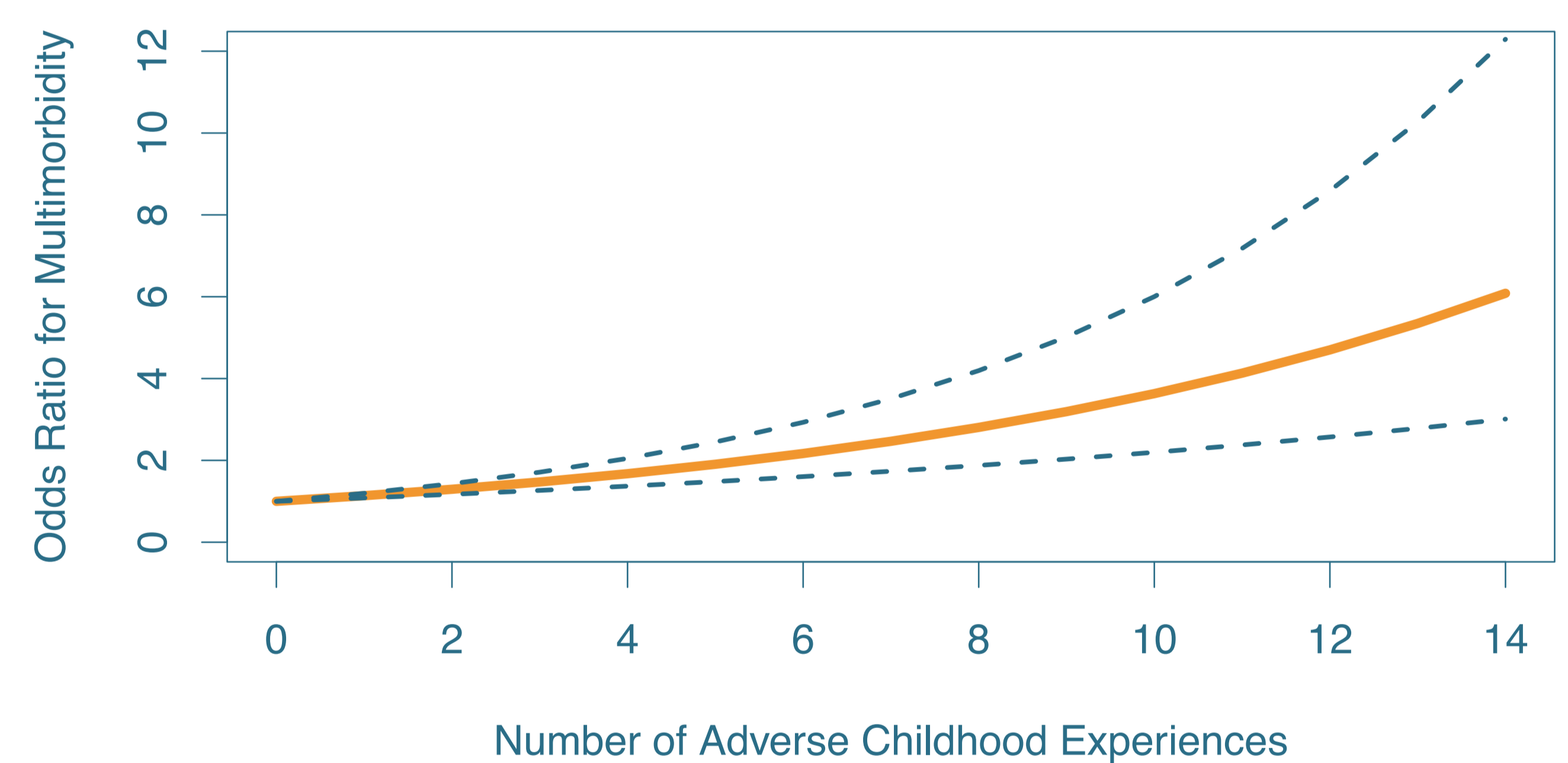
- Prospectively registered on PROSPERO (CRD42023389528).
- Seven databases searched from inception to 20 July 2023: APA PsycNET, CINAHL Plus, Cochrane CENTRAL, Embase, MEDLINE, Scopus, Web of Science.
- Inclusion criteria: studies of adverse events in childhood or multimorbidity in adulthood.
- Exclusion criteria: studies of adverse events in adulthood or multimorbidity in childhood.
- Risk of bias assessment using ROBINS-E. Meta-analysis of prevalence and dose-response meta-analysis.

Study Selection

- 15,586 records identified. 25 studies (372,162 people) included in the review; 8 studies (197,981 people) included in the meta-analysis.

Results

- Prevalence of exposure to ≥ 1 ACE = 48.1% (95% CI 33.4-63.1%).
- Prevalence of multimorbidity = 34.5% (95% CI 23.4-47.5%).
- Eight studies provided adequate data for dose-response meta-analysis (197,981 participants).
- There was a significant dose-dependent relationship between ACE exposure and multimorbidity ($p < 0.001$).



- Every additional ACE contributed a **12.9% increase** (95% CI 7.9-17.9%) in the odds for multimorbidity.
- There was heterogeneity among the included studies ($I^2 = 76.9%$, Cochran $Q = 102$, $p < 0.001$).

Discussion

- Multimorbidity commonly manifests in later life, but its origins may date back to childhood.
- Policies that improve childhood conditions may help to address multimorbidity at the population level.

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

There is a dose-dependent relationship between adverse childhood experiences and multimorbidity.



Consortium Against Pain in Equality

