A comparative study of hospital admissions in England, recently published in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, shows that some long-term physical conditions like asthma and migraine may increase the risk of self-harm. The study focused on admissions after an episode of deliberate self-injury, using a linked dataset of Hospital Episode Statistics for 1999-2011. Researchers confirmed the correlation between self-harm and certain mental disorders including depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and alcohol abuse. However, they also found an apparent link between some physical health problems and an increased risk of self-harm. Patients with migraine and asthma were almost twice as likely to self-harm, and those with epilepsy were approximately three times more likely to do so. Patients with psoriasis, diabetes, eczema, and inflammatory polyarthropathies showed more moderately increased risk. Other physical conditions studied were not associated with an increased risk. The authors commented that “it is important for physicians, general practitioners, and mental health workers to be aware of the physical disorders that are associated with an increased risk of self-harm so that at-risk individuals may be better identified and can be monitored for any psychiatric symptoms and mental distress.”

*Spark Extra!* Read the [study abstract](http://jrs.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/01/08/0141076814522033).