

Health and Wellness: Alzheimer's Prevention Guide

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If you have ever known someone who has Alzheimer's, you no doubt have personally seen how devastating it can be for both the patient and loved ones. With probably some combination of genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors causing it, symptoms typically begin after age 60. Experts suggest that as many as 5.1 million people may have Alzheimer's. There's just under a 50% chance of getting Alzheimer's for those who are 85 years young. Alzheimer's rates are expected to nearly triple over the next four decades. That means by 2050, Alzheimer's rates will affect approximately 100 million people worldwide.

There is good news however. How we take care of ourselves before then could make a world of difference. A growing body of research indicates that there are several preventive strategies within our control which may help to ward off Alzheimer's or at least reduce the risk by at least half. These same approaches will also contribute to improved health in other areas such as avoiding diabetes, heart and obesity problems. Thus, tweaking dietary and lifestyle adjustments improves overall long-term health.

1) Diet:

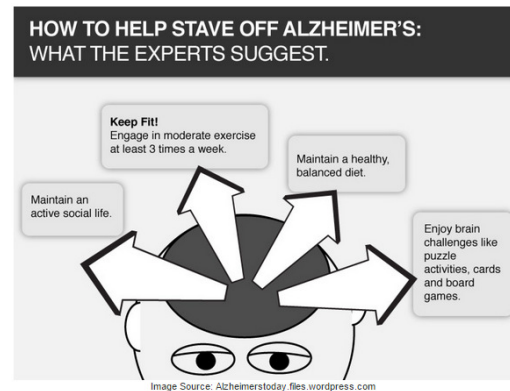
- a. Foods to eat (words shown in bold, within this paragraph, constitute main dietary staples): avocados; canola and olive oil; cinnamon, rosemary and turmeric spices; cruciferous and dark and green leafy vegetables; flaxseed oil; **fruits**; **legumes** (beans, peas and lentils); **nuts and seeds** (one ounce – a small handful daily provides a healthy source of Vitamin E); oily cold-water fish which are high in Omega-3 fatty acids (i.e., mackerel, salmon, sardines and light tuna); poultry; and tomatoes (e.g., a Mediterranean-style diet rich in fish, olive oil, fruits, **vegetables** and red wine and low in red meat and butter may help protect against Alzheimer's)
- b. Foods to limit: butter; cereal; coconut, palm and vegetable oils; eggs; high-fat dairy products; organ and red meat; saturated fats; and trans fats (found in many foods, snack pastries, fried foods and are listed on labels as "partially hydrogenated oils")
- c. Fat intake: A four-year study compared participants who consumed over 25 grams of saturated fat per day experiencing a 2-3 times greater likelihood to develop Alzheimer's than those who consumed half that amount
- d. Omega 3s & 6s: Generally eat more foods which contain significantly higher concentrations of Omega 3s than Omega 6s which will help to avoid higher levels of inflammation that has been implicated as bad for many things including brain health (Omega 3s are explained in http://www.thepreventionsocialworker.org/uploads/MBSH_23c_Health_Benefits_of_Omega-3s_September_2011.pdf)

2) Supplements/Lifestyle:

- a. Specific supplements/compounds: In coordination with your doctor, ensure that your levels of the following vitamins are within a good range: Vitamins B-6, B-9 (folate or folic acid), B-12, D-3 and E as well as gastrodin (with a critical eye, Google gastrodin and cognitive function support)
- b. Multivitamins: They should not contain iron or copper and only consume iron supplements under the direction of a physician
- c. Physical exercise: Aerobic exercise such as 40 minutes of brisk walking at least three times per week, or the best you are able to do, should be the norm
- d. Mental exercise: Similar to physical exercise, studies have shown that the following activities can help to prevent cognitive decline, dementia and Alzheimer's (e.g., participating in formal education, continuing to learn, being mentally engaged in life, reading and practicing cognitive skills)
- e. Aluminum: Although aluminum's role in Alzheimer's disease continues to be under investigation, a prudent course of action includes avoiding the use of aluminum in antacids, antiperspirant, baking powder, cookware and other products that augment its intake.

As always, you are encouraged to read as much as you can about this important topic. Google Alzheimer's and a keyword of your choice. Here are a few links to get you started:

- (1) <http://www.alzinfo.org/04/articles/certain-foods-may-protect-against-alzheimers-disease>
- (2) <http://www.pcrm.org/health/reports/dietary-guidelines-for-alzheimers-prevention>
- (3) <http://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers/publication/preventing-alzheimers-disease>



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