

# Natural Forms of Alzheimer's Prevention



Alzheimer's disease is now the sixth leading cause of death in the United States and kills more people each year than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined. Worldwide, over 46 million people suffer from Alzheimer's—a figure that's expected to nearly double every 20 years into the future.

Prevention is always preferable to treatment, and with Alzheimer's disease, it's currently the only option.

## What are the primary risk factors for developing Alzheimer's?

- Little/no exercise - #1 preventable factor
- Depression – 15% of Alzheimer's cases
- Smoking – 11% of Alzheimer's cases
- Midlife hypertension – 8% of Alzheimer's cases
- Midlife obesity – 7% of Alzheimer's cases
- Low education/low mental stimulation – 7% of Alzheimer's cases
- Diabetes – 3% of Alzheimer's cases

These factors, coupled with related research, point towards several ways you may be able to reduce your risk, including:

**Protect your heart** – While Alzheimer's attacks the brain, protecting your heart can shield both essential organs from life-threatening damage. This includes consuming a healthy diet, staying mentally and physically active, and maintaining normal blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

**Eat well** – A recent UCLA study found that the Mediterranean Diet (rich in fruits, vegetables, olive oil, legumes, whole grains and fish) is considered one of the best options for providing antioxidant-rich foods and reducing cognitive decline. Some studies indicate resveratrol, which occurs naturally in red

grapes, red wine and dark chocolate can lower risk and slow the progress of Alzheimer's. Of course, it's also important to note that recommendations regarding food and nutritional supplements are constantly evolving.

**Limit anticholinergic drugs** – The long-term use of many popular over-the-counter medications like Benadryl, Dramamine, Dimetapp, Advil PM, Paxil, Unison and other common sleep and allergy medications have been linked to cognitive impairment and dementia.

**Manage stress** – Stress has been proven to induce negative biochemical effects on the human body. Proven techniques for reducing stress include yoga, deep breathing, rhythmic exercise, Tai Chi, and daily meditation. Among meditation techniques, Kirtan Kriya (which takes only 12 minutes) has been shown to improve memory in those with documented memory decline issues.

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