

# Letter to the Editor: The Pundit Speaks

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## “Alzheimer’s May Be Helped with Increased Oxygen”

An estimated 5.5 million people have Alzheimer's disease, which is one of the top 10 leading causes of death for which there is currently no cure or treatments to prevent or decelerate it. Alzheimer's will claim 14 million victims by 2050. Incredibly, 1 in 3 seniors die with (not necessarily from) Alzheimer's disease (AD) or other types of dementia. Alzheimer's is a progressive disease that gradually destroys brain tissue and people's ability to remember, think, communicate, and lead independent lives. It is the most common form of dementia. Of the 47 million people worldwide living with dementia, around 65% are thought to have Alzheimer's disease. While deaths from other major causes are falling, deaths from Alzheimer's are rising fast. From 2000 to 2014, deaths from heart disease—the number one killer—fell by 14%, while deaths from Alzheimer's rose by 89%. To avoid development of Alzheimer's, go heavy on fruits and vegetables and exercise at least three times a week for no less than thirty minutes. A new study has concluded that aerobic exercise may reduce AD symptoms and appears effective in decreasing caregiver distress. Epidemiological studies show that midlife exercise was associated with delayed AD onset. Also, new studies are indicating that hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) has potential in AD. HBOT is a type of treatment during which the person breathes oxygen at a pressure that is greater than normal air pressure. The treatment, which is delivered inside a pressurized chamber, can cause the lungs to absorb up to three times more oxygen than usual. In the US, the FDA approved HBOT for the treatment of certain conditions, such as the "bends," or decompression sickness in divers and also approved HBOT for 13 other medical uses. Although HBOT has been used successfully to treat several neurological conditions, its effects on Alzheimer's disease "have never been thoroughly examined. Using "transgenic mice" that had been engineered to develop some of the hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease, investigators tested the effects of HBOT on behavioral symptoms and physical hallmarks. The researchers gave the transgenic mice 1 hour of HBOT every day for 14 days. HBOT reduced both disease-related plaques and brain inflammation by 40%, and it also reduced "behavioral deficits." HBOT shows promise as an Alzheimer's disease treatment, especially since it has been used to successfully treat other neurological conditions.

In the America that I love, researchers are desperately searching for ways to prevent or cure AD. Exercise and increased intake of oxygen appears to help with both. Please check out my books ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)), "*Alzheimer's Disease: Forget Antioxidants and Supplements,*" and "*Exercise and Reactive Oxygen Species: Likely the only health miracle out there.*" Please remember, a new case is diagnosed every 70 seconds.

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