

Letter to the Editor: The Pundit Speaks

By Randolph M. Howes, M.D., Ph.D.

December 6, 2020

“Dementia And How To Help Prevent It”

A new case of dementia is diagnosed every 70 seconds and there is currently no cure or treatments to prevent or cure it. The WHO estimates there are about 50 million people across the globe living with dementia, with nearly 10 million cases being added each year. Approximately 5.8 million Americans age 65 and older currently have the disease, and nearly two-thirds of those are women. It's the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. It is expected to skyrocket as the US population ages. Over 16 million Americans care for people with Alzheimer's (AD) or other dementias, without pay. Patients with diabetes have a three-fold higher risk for developing dementia, particularly women. Likewise, vascular disease has been shown to be associated with the development of dementia syndromes. Almost half of all dementia cases can be attributed to a small number of modifiable lifestyle risk factors, including smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity. Here are four simple ways that you can improve your brain health. 1) **Feed Your Brain.** Eighteen different studies showed that a style of diet, based on fruits, vegetables, and fish, can delay cognitive decline with regard to memory and function. The Mediterranean diet was found to have beneficial impacts on various neuropsychological functions, including improvements in language skills, processing speed, and memory tasks. Also, those who consumed more olive oil had significantly better performance in fluency and memory tasks. Foods like nuts, vegetables, fiber-rich foods, and less fatty meats like chicken—may be important in preventing Alzheimer disease. 2) **Get Active.** Various long-term studies, including one published in the *European Journal of Epidemiology*, have established a link between physical activity and better brain health. One study found that those who were physically active during their down time had better cognitive function and a slower rate of cognitive decline. Exercise may even be more effective in slowing down cognitive decline than a cognitive training program. 3) **Meditate.** Meditation practices may do wonders for your brain. A two-month meditation program study resulted in significant increases in blood flow, as well as improvements in verbal fluency and memory. And 4) **Sleep More.** According to recent studies, getting regular “deep sleep” can help protect against Alzheimer disease. There is something about this deep sleep that is helping protect you. Researchers have observed the link between poor sleep and long-term problems with memory and thinking.

In the America that I love, researchers are desperately searching for ways to prevent or cure Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Exercise and increased intake of oxygen appears to help with both. Please check out my books (www.amazon.com), "*Alzheimer's Disease: Forget Antioxidants and Supplements,*" and "*Exercise and Reactive Oxygen Species: Likely the Only Health Miracle Out There.*"

Randolph M. Howes, M.D., Ph.D.

Surgeon/Scientist/Patient Advocate

27439 Highway 441, Kentwood, LA 70444

985-229-6955 Home | 985-229-3760 – Fax | 985-514-0578 – Cell

rhowesmd@hughes.net | www.iwillfindthecure.org

