



Dealing with dementia

A mindful life

With no known cure for dementia prevention is pivotal. Try these brain-enhancing tips at any age:

- ✓ **Laughter** stimulates the brain, promoting memory and broader thinking.
- ✓ **Mind games** – forge fresh neural pathways by learning new things, conversation, word games, music, art and languages.
- ✓ **Relax** – meditation improves memory by increasing creativity, concentration and thickening the cerebral cortex. Studies show relaxation can increase brain size in eight weeks.
- ✓ **Exercise** improves concentration, preserves gray matter, reinforces neural connections and reduces beta amyloid. Scalp massage, deep breathing and inverted exercise increases oxygen to the brain, boosting brain cell cognition and growth.
- ✓ **Massage** eases anxiety, anger and wandering in Alzheimer's patients.
- ✓ **Partner dancing** was the only activity lowering dementia risk according to a 21-year study. It increases cognition, responsiveness, learning and laughter!
- ✓ **Learning and creativity** from childhood builds up enough synapses and nerve cell networks to cover loss later in life.
- ✓ **A rich social life** can stimulate the brain and decrease cognitive decline.
- ✓ **Sleep** refreshes memory and brain function. Sleep deficit forms beta amyloid.

Dementia is affecting Australians at an alarming rate.

Naturopath Caroline Robertson explores ways to prevent and pause its onset.

Dementia isn't a disease, but an umbrella term for a variety of symptoms associated with 100 different diseases or conditions, with Alzheimer's the most common. It's Australia's most common disability and the second leading cause of death. Over 350,000 Australians have dementia including more than 50 per cent of people in aged care.

Initially there's loss of memory, intellect, reasoning, orientation, social skills and physical function, learning difficulties and short attention span. It affects the brain's frontal lobe so people can become uninhibited, silent, paranoid, aggressive and incapable of simple activities such as walking and using the toilet. Dementia deaths often occur because sufferers can't swallow, stop eating and get infections like pneumonia.

Dementia is caused by damage to brain cells, which stops them from communicating effectively with each other. Gradually brain cells die, with destruction particularly affecting parts of the brain governing memory, cognition and personality. Symptoms often arise years before a formal dementia diagnosis, which is made by blood tests, mental evaluations and brain scans. Brain plaques don't always cause dementia.

Food for thought

Deficiencies and dehydration are linked to dementia. Protect brain cells with antioxidant berries, kale, Brussel sprouts, spinach, spirulina, green tea and moderate red wine. Omega-3 fatty acids protect against inflammation and degeneration. The Mediterranean diet reduces Alzheimer's risk by 28 per cent. It includes fruits, vegetables, fish, nuts and legumes with reduced meat, dairy and sweets. Avoid folate deficiencies with leafy green vegies and add coconut with its medium-chain triglycerides (MCT) for brain fuelling ketones. Eat eggs daily for choline and cholesterol.

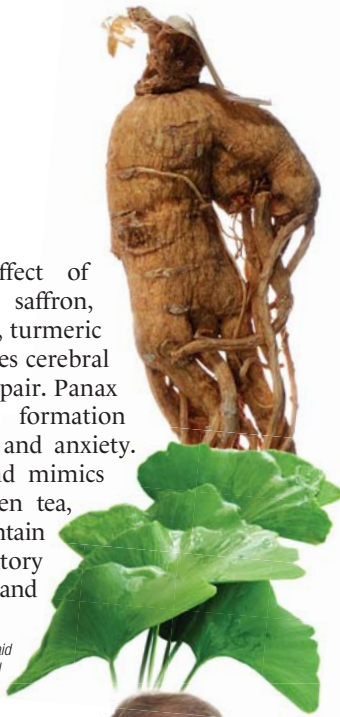
Give your brain an extra boost with brain cell supplements B complex, DHA, coenzyme Q10, folate, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, zinc, alpha lipoic acid and magnesium.



Memory mixes

Studies show the positive effect of ashwagandha, brahmi, ginkgo, saffron, grape seed extract, panax ginseng, turmeric and lemon balm. Brahmi increases cerebral circulation, memory and brain repair. Panax ginseng reduces beta amyloid formation while reducing brain cell death and anxiety. Ashwagandha is regenerative and mimics Alzheimer's drug donepezil. Green tea, grape seed extract and turmeric contain antioxidants and anti-inflammatory agents that bind to heavy metals and reduce beta amyloid. 📺

Caroline Robertson is an author, naturopath and first aid trainer. She offers courses, consultations, retreats and guided meditations. www.carolinerobertson.com.au



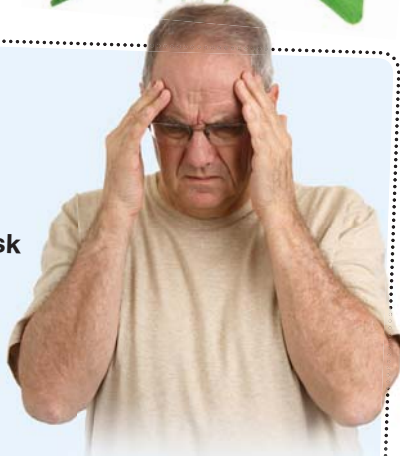
Brain drains

Reduce dementia risk by avoiding these brain baddies:

- **High trans fats and obesity**
- **Smoking** starves the brain of oxygen
- **Anticholinergic and statin drugs** deplete coenzyme Q10
- **Excess salt** increases stroke risk, which can cause vascular dementia
- Multiple **head trauma** can increase Alzheimer's incidence
- **Ceramide** in skin creams increases beta amyloid protein connected with Alzheimer's
- **Depression** increases dementia likelihood
- **General anaesthesia** promotes inflammation of neural tissue possibly contributing to dementia precursors
- **Stress** creates cortisol and inflammatory chemicals that cause brain cell dysfunction and destruction
- **Mercury and aluminum** have been linked to brain toxicity
- **Sugar** is connected to dementia as Alzheimer's is referred to type-3 diabetes
- **Obesity, high cholesterol and high blood pressure** together increase the chance of dementia by six times according to a long-term study of 1,500 adults
- **Excess iron** should be avoided as research revealed significantly increased iron in Alzheimer's patient's brains.





National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

For more information on how to reduce your risk of acquiring a noise-induced hearing loss, go to: hearsmart.org



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