

Here's how to prevent dementia, according to new world health guidelines

16 May 2019, by Ryan W. Miller, Usa Today



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Eat well, exercise often and don't take some of those vitamins, the World Health Organization said in newly released guidelines on how to reduce risk of dementia.

With dementia already affecting 50 million people globally and with nearly 10 million new cases each year, the WHO issued new guidelines Tuesday in efforts to curb its rise and help health providers and lawmakers provide better care and policy around it.

"In the next 30 years, the number of people with dementia is expected to triple," WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement. "We need to do everything we can to reduce our [risk of dementia](#). The [scientific evidence](#) gathered for these guidelines confirm what we have suspected for some time, that what is good for our heart, is also good for our brain."

The nearly 100-page report outlines various recommendations with varying degrees of scientific backing for people to consider.

Physical activity, not smoking or drinking too much, eating a balanced diet (the WHO named a Mediterranean-like diet specifically) and managing [blood pressure](#) and weight were all among the recommendations the global health group said might help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

Taking pills for vitamins B and E, polyunsaturated fatty acids and multi-complex supplements is not recommended to reduce your risk, the WHO said.

Dementia affects people's memory, comprehension, orientation, judgment and other cognitive functions beyond what is normal for aging. A variety of diseases or conditions, like Alzheimer's or stroke, can cause dementia, the WHO says.

"While age is the strongest known risk factor for [cognitive decline](#), dementia is not a natural or inevitable consequence of aging," the report states. "Prevention of dementia is possible through a public health approach."

©2019 USA Today

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

APA citation: Here's how to prevent dementia, according to new world health guidelines (2019, May 16) retrieved 25 October 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-05-dementia-world-health-guidelines.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.