

February 1, 2022 / Dr. Anthony J. Levinson, MD

CAN YOU PREVENT DEMENTIA? 6 WAYS YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK

1. KEY POINTS

- A. Dementia is often related to either toxic proteins or damage to blood vessels
- B. Six ways to reduce the risk include:
 - i. Physical activity and weight management
 - ii. Treat medical conditions to promote blood vessel health, such as
 - 1. *High blood pressure (hypertension)*
 - 2. *Diabetes*
 - 3. *Elevated blood cholesterol*
 - iii. Stop smoking and don't drink too much alcohol
 - iv. Eat a healthy diet, such as the Mediterranean Diet
 - v. Stay active cognitively and socially
 - vi. Manage health conditions and watch out for medication adverse effects
 - 1. *Watch for medications that have the potential for adverse effects on memory and cognitive function*
 - a. *E.g. benzodiazepines or 'Z-drug' sleeping pills*
 - b. *Certain types of pain medications, like those that contain opioids*
 - 2. *Look after other important health issues*
 - a. *Get help with hearing loss*
 - b. *Prevent traumatic brain injury*
 - c. *Treat depression*
 - d. *Avoid air pollution*
- C. The more, the merrier
 - i. 2-3 healthy lifestyle choices can lower risk of Alzheimer disease by 37%
 - ii. 4-5 healthy lifestyle behaviours can lower risk by 60%

2. OTHER FREE RESOURCES

iGeriCare – IGERICARE.CA ONLINE DEMENTIA EDUCATION

Lessons: How to Promote Brain Health and What is Dementia?

<https://igericare.healthhq.ca/lessons>

Learn more about dementia from our iGeriCare lessons.

Participate in our live online events or watch the recordings.

3. MCMASTER OPTIMAL AGING PORTAL

Your source for healthy aging information that you can trust.

<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/age-well/cognitive-health-and-dementia>

<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/watch> - videos series

<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/e-learning/lessons> - e-learning series

Field Code Changed

4. SMOKING CESSATION RESOURCES

Canadian Cancer Society smoker's helpline website.

<https://www.smokershelpline.ca/>

5. CANADIAN 24-HOUR MOVEMENT GUIDELINES

Guidelines to help Canadians move more, reduce sedentary time, and sleep well.

<https://csepguidelines.ca/>

6. COURSERA ONLINE COURSE: HACKING EXERCISE FOR HEALTH THE SURPRISING NEW SCIENCE OF FITNESS

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/hacking-exercise-health>

7. OTHER REFERENCES

Livingston et al, 2020. Lancet Commission on Dementia prevention, intervention, and care. [https://www.thelancet.com/article/S0140-6736\(20\)30367-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S0140-6736(20)30367-6/fulltext)

Dhana et al, 2020. Healthy lifestyle and the risk of Alzheimer dementia: Findings from 2 longitudinal studies. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7455318/>