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For more information about Sleep related issues in the Senior years check these out...

From Tuck: Advancing Better Sleep

<https://www.tuck.com/sleep-aging/>

From National Institute on Aging

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/good-nights-sleep>

From National Sleep Foundation

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/aging-and-sleep>

Six Pillars of Preventing Alzheimer's Disease: Part 3

Pillar #6: Quality sleep

It's common for people with Alzheimer's disease to suffer from insomnia and other sleep problems. But new research suggests that disrupted sleep isn't just a symptom of Alzheimer's, but a possible risk factor. An increasing number of studies have linked poor sleep to higher levels of beta-amyloid, a sticky brain-clogging protein that in turn further interferes with sleep—especially with the deep sleep necessary for memory formation. Other studies emphasize the importance of uninterrupted sleep for flushing out brain toxins.

If nightly sleep deprivation is slowing your thinking and affecting your mood, you may be at greater risk of developing symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. The vast majority of adults need at least 8 hours of sleep per night.

Get screened for sleep apnea. If you've received complaints about your snoring, you may want to get tested for sleep apnea, a potentially dangerous condition where breathing is disrupted during sleep. Treatment can make a huge difference in both your health and sleep quality.

Establish a regular sleep schedule. Going to bed and getting up at the same time reinforces your natural circadian rhythms. Your brain's clock responds to regularity.

Be smart about napping. While taking a nap can be a great way to recharge, especially for older adults, it can make insomnia worse. If insomnia is a problem for you, consider eliminating napping. If you must nap, do it in the early afternoon, and limit it to thirty minutes.

Set the mood. Reserve your bed for sleep and sex, and ban television and computers from the bedroom (both are stimulating and may lead to difficulties falling asleep).

Create a relaxing bedtime ritual. Take a hot bath, do some light stretches, write in your journal, or dim the lights. As it becomes habit, your nightly ritual will send a powerful signal to your brain that it's time for deep restorative sleep.

Quiet your inner chatter. When stress, anxiety, or negative internal dialogues keep you awake, get out of bed. Try reading or relaxing in another room for twenty minutes then hop back in.

Other tips to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's

Just as what's good for the body is also good for the brain, so too is the converse: what's bad for the body is bad for the brain.



Stop smoking. Smoking is one of the most preventable risk factors for Alzheimer's disease and dementia. One study found that smokers over the age of 65 have a nearly 80% higher risk of Alzheimer's than those who have never smoked.

Control blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Both high blood pressure and high total cholesterol are associated with an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. Improving those numbers are good for your brain as well as your heart.

Watch your weight. A major study found that people who were overweight in midlife were twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's down the line, and those who were obese had three times the risk.

Drink only in moderation. While there appear to be brain benefits in consuming red wine in moderation, heavy alcohol consumption can dramatically raise the risk of Alzheimer's and accelerate brain aging.

Alzheimer's treatments: What's on the horizon?

Despite many promising leads, new treatments for Alzheimer's are slow to emerge. By Mayo Clinic Staff

Current Alzheimer's treatments temporarily improve symptoms of memory loss and problems with thinking and reasoning. Experts are cautiously hopeful about developing Alzheimer's treatments that can stop or significantly delay the progression of Alzheimer's. A growing understanding of how the disease disrupts the brain has led to potential Alzheimer's treatments that short-circuit disease processes. The following treatment options are among the strategies currently being studied.

Taking aim at plaques

Some of the new Alzheimer's treatments in development target microscopic clumps of the protein beta-amyloid (plaques). Plaques are a characteristic sign of Alzheimer's disease.

Keeping tau from tangling

A vital brain cell transport system collapses when a protein called tau twists into microscopic fibers called tangles, which are another common brain abnormality of Alzheimer's. Researchers are looking at a way to prevent tau from forming tangles.

Reducing inflammation

Alzheimer's causes chronic, low-level brain cell inflammation. Researchers are studying ways to treat inflammatory processes at work in Alzheimer's disease.

Researching insulin resistance

Researchers are studying the effects of insulin on the brain and brain cell function, and insulin changes in the brain that may be related to Alzheimer's. A trial testing an insulin nasal spray to determine whether it slows the progression of Alzheimer's was recently reported as negative.

Studying the heart-head connection

Growing evidence suggests that brain health is closely linked to heart and blood vessel health. The risk of developing Alzheimer's appears to increase as a result of many conditions that damage the heart or arteries. These include high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and high cholesterol.

Hormones

In one study, taking estrogen-based hormone therapy for at least a year during perimenopause or early menopause appeared to protect thinking and memory in women with a higher risk of Alzheimer's disease.

