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Healthy Lifestyle....

Living a healthy lifestyle can impact both your lifespan and the quality of your life, says the U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

But regardless of your age, the NIDDK emphasizes that it is never too late to be good to your mind and body.

The agency encourages older adults to:

- Eat breakfast every day.
- Select high-fiber foods.
- Have three daily servings of vitamin D-fortified low-fat or fat-free dairy.
- Drink plenty of water or water-based fluids.
- Fit physical activity into your life and schedule.
- Stay connected and engaged with family, friends and your community.

Can Alzheimer's be stopped?

Five lifestyle behaviors are key, new research suggests

Following four out of five lifestyle behaviors can protect against mental decline, even in people with increased genetic risk.

By Linda Carroll

There's no cure for or drug to stop Alzheimer's disease, but it may be possible to hold off dementia — even in people who have a genetic risk, researchers recently reported at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference. The key is not any one factor, several studies show, but following a combination of healthy lifestyle habits. And the more healthy habits a person adopts, the lower the risk of cognitive decline.

People who followed four out of five lifestyle behaviors — including regular exercise, cognitive stimulation, a brain-healthy diet and not smoking — over a six-year period had a 60 percent lower risk of developing Alzheimer's dementia when compared to people who practiced only one or none of these habits, according to researchers from Rush University in Chicago.

Similarly, a UK study found that among people with a heightened genetic risk of cognitive decline, dementia was 32 percent lower in those with a healthy lifestyle.



In a third study, University of California-San Francisco researchers found that smokers had twice the risk of developing cognitive impairment compared to non-smokers and those who had kicked the habit.

“This reinforces the notion that some of these lifestyle factors may actually affect the trajectory of cognitive aging and the development of dementia,” said Dr. Ronald Petersen, director of the Mayo Clinic Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center. “We certainly accept that with heart disease. We need to adopt a similar mindset for cognitive aging.” EB. 17, 201902:17

For people who fear dementia is inevitable because of family history or a genetic profile, this tells them “the game is not over because they have increased risk,” said Petersen, who was not affiliated with the new studies.

The Rush study analyzed data from 1,845 participants in the Chicago Health and Aging Project and 920 from the Rush Memory and Aging Project who had no dementia at the start. Participants were given lifestyle scores that depended on how many of five possible healthy behaviors they subscribed to:

- not smoking
- exercising at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 150 minutes a week
- consuming a brain-supporting diet
- light to moderate alcohol consumption
- engaging in late-life cognitive activities

Each behavior got either a zero or a one, for a maximum possible score of five.

What is the MIND diet?

Participants’ diets were rated on how closely they resembled the “MIND” diet (Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay), which is made up of leafy green vegetables, beans, olive oil, nuts and poultry, while avoiding red meat, sweets and fried foods, the study’s presenting author, Dr. Klodian Dhana, told NBC News. People with diets in the upper 40 percent got a point for what they were consuming, while others got zeroes.

During the approximately six years of follow-up, 608 participants developed Alzheimer’s dementia. When the researchers analyzed their data, they found the risk of Alzheimer’s was 37 percent lower in people who practiced two to three healthy lifestyle behaviors and 60 percent lower in those who practiced four to five of those behaviors compared to those with scores of zero or one.

