

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND ITS MANAGEMENT THROUGH FOOD

WHAT IS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE?

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disease that destroys memory and other important mental functions. It may start with mild confusion and difficulty in remembering. Eventually, people with the disease may even forget important people in their lives and undergo dramatic personality changes.

SOME SYMPTOMS OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

- Increased memory loss and confusion.
- Problems recognizing family and friends.
- Inability to learn new things.
- Difficulty carrying out multistep tasks such as getting dressed.
- Problems coping with new situations.
- Impulsive behavior.

CAUSES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Even though the causes of Alzheimer's aren't yet fully understood, scientists believe that it can be caused by a combination of genetics, lifestyle and environmental factors that may affect the brain over time.

MANAGEMENT OF ALZHEIMER'S

Substantial evidence suggests that a combination of **healthful diet steps** and **regular physical exercise** may reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. One should include aerobic exercise in daily routine, equivalent to 40 minutes of brisk walking 3 times per week.

Following healthful diet steps should be followed:

1. Minimize intake of saturated and trans fats. *Saturated fat* is found primarily in dairy products, meats, and certain oils (coconut and palm oils). *Trans fats* are found in many snacks, pastries and fried foods and are listed on labels as "partially hydrogenated oils."

2. Vegetables, legumes (beans, peas, and lentils), fruits, and whole grains should replace meats and dairy products in the diet.

3. *Vitamin E* should come from food, rather than supplements. The recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for vitamin E is 15 mg per day. To get 15mg Vitamin E, one can choose from the following common foods to achieve their daily targets:

- Sunflower seeds, dry roasted 1oz = 7.4mg
- Almond, dry roasted 1oz = 6.8mg
- Peanuts, dry roasted: 1oz = 2.2mg
- Spinach, boiled, ½ cup = 1.9mg
- Kiwifruit, 1 medium = 1.1mg
- Mango, sliced ½ cup = 0.7mg
- Tomato, raw, 1 medium = 0.7mg

4. A reliable source of vitamin *B12*, such as fortified foods or a supplement providing at least the recommended daily allowance (2.4 µg per day for adults), should be part of the daily diet.

5. If using multiple vitamins, choose those without *iron* and *copper* (take iron supplements only when directed by your physician.)

6. Avoid use of cookware, antacids, baking powder, or other products that contain aluminum in daily routine.



References: <http://www.webmd.com>, <http://www.mayoclinic.org>, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0197458014003480>, <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminE-HealthProfessional/#h3>