



AWARENESS

READ, SOCIALISE, PLAY - ENJOYABLE WAYS TO HELP PREVENT ALZHEIMER'S

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 'Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and may contribute to 60–70% of cases'.

A gradual progression of memory loss, confusion, getting lost, and needing care, it is distressing for the person with the disease as well as for family members.

There's hope, though. The WHO says:

'Studies show that people can reduce their risk of dementia by getting regular exercise, not smoking, avoiding harmful use of alcohol, controlling their weight, eating a healthy diet, and maintaining healthy blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels. Additional risk factors include depression, low educational attainment, social isolation, and cognitive inactivity.'

A 2018 article in *Nature* goes further, stating that there's 'evidence to show that, even with limited schooling, a robust social network and intellectual stimulation through puzzles and other means might help the brain to stay healthy'.

So it's never too late to benefit from learning new things.

Explore enjoyable hobbies to help your brain

The UK's NHS suggests these ways for you to stay socially and mentally active:

- reading
- learning foreign languages
- playing musical instruments
- volunteering in your local community
- taking part in group sports, such as bowling
- trying new activities or hobbies
- maintaining an active social life.

The 2018 article in *Nature*, by Emily Sohn, discusses a letter signed by 109 scientists that suggest there is: 'enough evidence to justify encouraging middle-aged people to ward off dementia by avoiding obesity and stopping smoking, among other advice, with the potential to prevent up to one-fifth of new cases by 2025'.

Get help for your hearing loss, depression, loneliness, or sleep and consult with a qualified health professional in addition, says Mayo Clinic.