



# HEALTH MATTERS

## • NUGGETS •

### Alzheimer's Disease

#### In numbers

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and may contribute to 60-70% of cases. This progressive neurological disorder primarily affects adults older than 65 years and the risk to develop Alzheimer's disease is proportional to age.

- Vascular factors: high blood pressure, stroke and cardiovascular disease may increase risk.
- Lifestyle factors: physical inactivity, smoking, poor diet, social isolation and cognitive inactivity.
- Other medical conditions: include diabetes, high cholesterol, obesity and sleep disorders.
- Environmental factors: exposure to toxins, head trauma and viral infection.

#### Have you heard?

Identified factors that play a role are:

- Genetics: family history and genetic mutation increase the risk.
- Inflammation: activation of immune cells in the brain may contribute to diseases.
- Age: risks increase significantly after age 65.

#### Food for thought

- Encourage individuals with Alzheimer's to keep their independence.
- Maintain their autonomy and individuality.
- Engage in activities and hobbies they enjoy.
- Connect with support groups, family, and friends to share experiences and receive guidance.
- Maintain a consistent daily routine.
- Use music, art and other sensory experiences to stimulate their mind and emotions.

#### Myths and Facts

**Fact:** The most common early symptoms include: memory loss, difficulty in planning, problem-solving, confusion and changes in personality or behaviour.

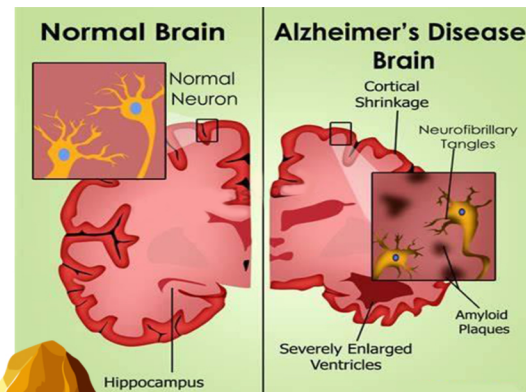
**Myth:** Coconut oil and dietary supplements can cure or delay the onset of Alzheimer's.

**Fact:** As the disease progresses, symptoms can become more severe, impacting the ability to communicate, recognize loved ones and perform everyday tasks.

**Myth:** All Alzheimer cases are genetic.

**Fact:** There are a number of drugs available which can help to treat symptoms and slow progression of the condition.

**Myth:** Alzheimer's is a death sentence.



#### References:

- "The Pathogenesis of Alzheimer's Disease", by Selkoe DJ, published in Science.
- "The 36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People Who Have Alzheimer Disease, Other Dementias, and Memory Loss" by Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins.