

## ***Do You Know Someone With Alzheimer's Disease?***

By

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Alzheimer's disease affects nearly half of North Americans by age 85. According to the American Academy of Neurology, unless preventive measures are developed, Alzheimer's rates will nearly triple over the next four decades. Worldwide, Alzheimer's rates will affect 100 million people by 2050.

Scientific studies suggest that preventive strategies are now feasible through heart healthy eating and exercise. Studies suggest that the same foods that are beneficial for the heart are also healthful for the brain and may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

The seven (7) dietary principles to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease were prepared for presentation at the International Conference on Nutrition and the Brain in Washington, D.C. in July 2013. They are as follows:

1. Minimize your intake of saturated fats 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 snack 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 be the primary staples of the diet.
3. One ounce of nuts or seeds (one small handful) daily provides a healthful source of Vitamin E.
4. A reliable source of Vitamin B12, such as fortified foods or a supplement providing at least the recommended daily allowance (2.4 mcg per day for adults) should be part of your daily diet.
5. When selecting multiple vitamins, choose those without iron and copper, and consume iron supplements only when directed by your physician.
6. While aluminum's role in Alzheimer's disease remains a matter of investigation, it is prudent to avoid the use of cookware, antacids, baking powder, or other products that contribute dietary aluminum.
7. Include aerobic exercise in your routine, equivalent to 40 minutes of brisk walking three times per week.

While treatment for the disease remains unsatisfactory, scientific studies suggest that these preventive strategies are now feasible and may reduce the risk by half or more. As Alzheimer's rates and medical costs continue to climb, perhaps these simple changes to diet and lifestyle may help in preventing cognitive problems. (Source: [A Special Report: July 2013, Dietary Guidelines for Alzheimer's Prevention, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, PCRM.org](#))