

# Targeting Wellness Newsletter

## Good News for Good Health!

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### QUOTES OF THE MONTH

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It's not the events of our lives that shape us, but the meaning we attach to those events.

Anthony Robbins

"The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why"

-Mark Twain

## Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

I recall as a child hearing that losing one's memory is just a part of "getting old". Today, Alzheimer's disease is becoming an epidemic, affecting over 5 million Americans of all ages. One in ten people in their 60's, one in five in their 70's and nearly one in three in their 80's will develop Alzheimer's disease. This progressive and irreversible brain "robber" destroys memories and thinking capabilities. According to the Alzheimer's Association, as the population continues to age, the number of seniors affected is expected to increase from 5.6 million to 7.1 million by 2025.

Here are a few facts about the disease:

- ◆ It is the most common cause of dementia
- ◆ It is ranked the sixth leading cause of death in the nation, however, recent estimates indicate it may be ranked third, just behind heart disease and cancer as a cause of death in our elderly.
- ◆ The complex brain changes involved in the onset and progression are still being studied but discovery shows these changes may begin a decade or more before memory and other cognitive problems appear. (NIH—National Institute of Aging)
- ◆ Changes involve the abnormal deposits of proteins which form amyloid plaques (clumps) and tau tangles (bundles of fibers) throughout the brain causing healthy neurons to lose connections with other healthy neurons, leading to brain cell death.
- ◆ Initial damage appears in the hippocampus and the entorhinal cortex where memories are formed.

What is the difference between Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia?

Alzheimer's causes dementia. Dementia is the loss of cognitive function such as thinking, remembering, and reasoning. Behavior function impairment can interfere with daily life and activities. There are different severity levels of dementia and various types.

Alzheimer's disease was named after Dr. Alois Alzheimer's in 1906 who discovered the abnormal changes in a woman's brain after she died from an unusual mental illness.

Early signs that could indicate Alzheimer's Disease:

- ◆ Memory loss that interrupts daily life
- ◆ Challenges in planning or solving problems
- ◆ Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- ◆ Confusion with time or place
- ◆ Trouble with spacial relationships
- ◆ Trouble using words in speaking or writing
- ◆ Misplacing things and not being able to retrace steps
- ◆ Decreased or poor judgment
- ◆ Withdrawal from work or social activities

Possible Causes of Alzheimer's Disease:

- ◆ Age
- ◆ Genetics to some degree but not as much as lifestyle
- ◆ Risk factors that cause vascular conditions such as heart disease and stroke (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and obesity) may also increase AD risk
- ◆ Serious head injuries

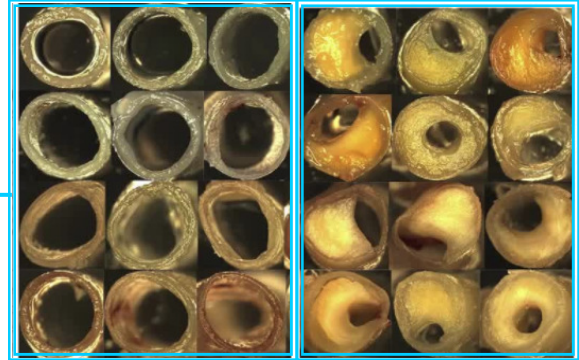
Resource: [www.newbridge.org](http://www.newbridge.org); National Institute on Aging; Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures.



## How Can We Prevent Developing Alzheimer's?

When you think of atherosclerosis, you may think of its common association with heart disease. But studies have proven that this clogging and narrowing of the arteries can impact virtually any human organism including the brain. Just as the walls of an artery in the heart can lead to heart disease, and in the brain can cause a stroke, research now shows those with Alzheimer's have significantly more atherosclerotic narrowing of the intracranial arteries, as stated by Dr. Michael Greger during one of his many presentations of Alzheimer's and Diet. Drs. Dean and Ayesha Sherzai have devoted their careers to exploring the prevention of Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases. Their NEURO plan is based on five pivotal factors affecting mind health along with the latest scientific research.

Some blame this epidemic on the aging population. But virtually 100 years ago, Alzheimer's was unknown no matter how old you were. The explosion in the last 50-60 years is only true in developed countries (those in India are spared the disease). There seems to be something in our environment that may be causing this increase. The Journal of the American College of Nutrition cited this increase is due to copper toxicity. Meat eating may contribute to copper toxicity. Over the last half century, developed countries have started using copper plumbing for our water, increased use of multi-vitamins with copper, and started eating a lot more meat. Reducing the amount of meat consumption and eating more whole foods such as fruits and vegetables can significantly help; the copper found in meat is easily absorbed by our body.



Normal arteries

Clogged arteries

**YOUR HEALTH IS AN  
INVESTMENT, NOT  
EXPENSE**

**Healthy**  
isn't a goal.  
it's a way of living.

Research shows that living a healthy lifestyle not only helps to reduce the risk of chronic diseases of the body but it can support the health of our brain! This in turn can have a profound impact on helping to prevent Alzheimer's disease!

Here are some recommendations from the NIH and the Alzheimer's Association.

- ◆ Exercise regularly, which increases blood and oxygen flow to the brain.
- ◆ Eat a heart-healthy diet which includes lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, limiting sugar and saturated fats (primarily found in animal and processed products).
- ◆ Keep your mind active with puzzles, learning new things, positive stimulation
- ◆ Spending time with friends and family
- ◆ Control your blood pressure and cholesterol
- ◆ Prevent or manage Type 2 diabetes
- ◆ Maintain a healthy weight
- ◆ Get plenty of sleep
- ◆ "Fall-proof" your home and wear seatbelts to reduce the risk of head injuries
- ◆ Don't smoke

Sources: <https://newbridge.org/education/alzheimers-awareness-month/>  
Dr. Greger YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJETBuICiCc>  
Drs. Sherzai—theneuroplan.com



## Creativity Can Improve Well-being

Over the last few decades, more and more evidence supports the fact that tapping into our creative side can be a tremendous wellness practice! In fact, the benefits can be as important as a balanced diet, regular exercise or even meditation.

Creative expression through music, visual arts, dance and writing can:

- ◆ Decrease depression
- ◆ Increase positive emotions
- ◆ Reduce our stress response (Fight-or-Flight-or-Freeze)
- ◆ And can even improve the function of our immune system

Even just engaging in the arts as a viewer can be impactful; however, studies show that being an active participant shows increased positive effects. More recent studies have even shown that creative self-expression and exposure to the arts can not only improve one's cognitive and psychological health, but also physical conditions such as Parkinson's disease, various forms of dementia and even cancer!

The Mayo Clinic conducted their own study on the effects engagement in such activities as painting, drawing and sculpting, woodworking, pottery, ceramics, quilting, and sewing have on us. Engaging in such creative activities in middle and old age may delay cognitive decline in very old age (as stated in Psychology Today). Seems that these creative activities help protect or even prevent neurons in the brain from dying. New neuron growth is stimulated and perhaps could even help recruit new neurons to maintain cognitive activities in old age (American Academy of Neurology, 2015).

Creativity is generally insightful, novel, simple, elegant, and generative meaning one idea can trigger a cascade of other creative ideas.

*Creativity is different from Innovation:*

- ◆ Creativity = **Producing** new ideas, approaches or actions.
- ◆ Innovation = **Applying** new ideas, approaches or actions.

*Creativity is different from Discovery:*

- ◆ Creativity = **To make** something new
- ◆ Discovery = **To find** something new

Everyone, at any age, can learn to be creative. There are some personality traits that seem to have a much easier time tapping into their creative side. They include being open to new ideas and novelty, being curious, persistent, energized by positivity and motivated by intrinsic "rewards". How can we generate more creativity?

1. When faced with a situation, write out as many ideas and possibilities as you can think of without rationalizing, judging, or trying to figure out "how"...not necessary at this point. Just brainstorm!
2. Take time to connect with yourself in solitude, focusing on your emotions and work on self-reflection.
3. Be open and playful! Not putting limits on yourself or your employees to only "color within the lines".

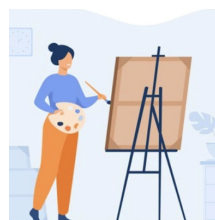


*What are some fun things you can incorporate in the workplace for your employees?*

I think it's safe to say that you have many employees with hidden talents. Why not explore them:

- ◆ Host a Talent "show"
- ◆ Have a painting/drawing class offered by an outside source—you could purchase the supplies for your employees through wellness funding
- ◆ Encourage employees to bring in something they have made which can be displayed in the break room
- ◆ Share a talent—maybe you have an employee who excels in an art that he/she would be willing to teach others who are interested
- ◆ Community Painting in the break room. Perhaps pick a picture. Set up a drawing board or paint and encourage employees to add onto the picture when they take their break.

*Ask your employees for their ideas for an activity. Get creative, think outside the box and cultivate wellness!*



## Increasing Gratitude Towards Self

Question: The way you speak to yourself each day, would you ever say those things to your dearest friend or a hurt child?

We tend to say the meanest things to ourselves when we don't live up to our expectations. Starting now, pick one of the quotes below and repeat it to yourself every day this month. Keep one that you resonate with the most or try out a few different ones throughout the month. Pay attention to what you think and say about yourself. Practice being kind to yourself!

1. If you listen to your body when it whispers, you won't have to hear it scream.
2. Create healthy habits, not restrictions.
3. Self love is the greatest medicine.
4. Your life only gets better when you do. Work on yourself and the rest will follow.
5. The food you eat can either be the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison.
6. Stop hating yourself for everything you aren't and start loving yourself for everything you already are.
7. Embrace and love your body. It is the most amazing thing you'll ever own.
8. Be patient with yourself. Nothing in nature blooms all year.
9. A year from now, you'll wish you had started today.
10. You are your only limit.
11. Don't let your mind bully your body.
12. You are what you eat, so don't be fast, cheap, easy or fake. ☺
13. The difference between who you are and who you want to be is what you do.
14. If you don't take care of your body, where are you going to live?
15. It's not about being the best. It's about being better than you were yesterday.
16. Don't wait until you've reached your goal to be proud of yourself. Be proud of every step you take toward reaching that goal.
17. The body achieves what the mind believes.
18. You don't get what you wish for. You get what you work for.
19. If you wouldn't say it to a friend, don't say it to yourself.
20. Think about what could go right.
21. Push harder than yesterday if you want a different tomorrow.
22. Strength doesn't come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn't do.
23. Find the gift or opportunity in every situation.
24. Become a priority in your life.
25. I am grateful for being me.





## Turmeric and Alzheimer's Disease

Is it possible that a spice, such as turmeric, could actually have an effect on lowering the prevalence of dementia? The answer is yes! Those who live in rural India, who eat a lot of turmeric, actually have the lowest reported occurrence of dementia and Alzheimer's.

Not far from us, in rural Pennsylvania, Alzheimer's occurs in 19 out of 1000 people every year. That might not sound like a lot. But when you compare it to rural India, using the same diagnostic criteria, that same rate is 3 out of 1000, confirming that they have the lowest reported Alzheimer's rates in the world.

A study was done so as not to just assume this was attributed to the turmeric consumption (as part of curry). Those who consumed curry at least occasionally did better on simple cognitive tests than those who did not. And those who ate curry often had only about half the odds of showing any cognitive impairment. This may suggest that curry consumption MAY indeed be associated with better cognitive function.

One very important thing to keep in mind (no pun intended!) is that it does matter what is being curried! It's no coincidence that the country with the lowest prevalence of Alzheimer's also is among the lowest in meat consumption, with a significant percentage of Indians following a meat-free and egg-free diet.

### Brain Benefits of Turmeric

- ◆ Turmeric contains Curcumin, a powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant
- ◆ Improves cognitive function and memory—a few grams of turmeric in your food can aid the prevention of memory loss.
- ◆ Relieves ailments related to oxidative stress\* by protecting the body against cancerous cells, relieving brain fogging, gaining mental clarity and improving sleep.
- ◆ Works as an antidepressant—research has shown that increased Curcumin increases the level of serotonin and dopamine in the brain (the “feel-good” hormones)
- ◆ Relieves anxiety and stress by increasing levels of glutathione which help to reduce anxiety, stress and other cognitive impairment due to stress.

### Turmeric and Black Pepper Combo

Turmeric is also known as the “golden spice”.

Combining turmeric with black pepper enhances its medicinal effects.

Piperine, the bioactive compound found in black pepper, boosts the absorption of Curcumin by up to 2,000%

- ◆ Piperine makes it easier for Curcumin to pass through the intestinal walls and into your bloodstream.
- ◆ It slows down the breakdown of Curcumin by the liver, increasing its blood levels.



### Golden Milk Recipe

This “liquid gold” is a wonderful anti-inflammatory drink to add to your day. The addition of ginger increases this benefit!

Perfect for an evening beverage just before bed, here's Dr. Weil's recipe for Golden Milk:

- Heat 2 cups light, unsweetened coconut milk (or almond or soy milk)
- Add 1/2 tablespoon peeled, grated fresh ginger
- Add 1 tablespoon peeled, grated fresh turmeric
- Add 3-4 ground black peppercorns
- Heat all ingredients in a saucepan
- Stir well
- Bring to a simmer and cover for 10 minutes.
- Strain the excess ginger and sweeten to taste (if desired). Maybe top with some cinnamon or other complementary spice like nutmeg or allspice.

(website: <https://www.drweil.com/videos-features/videos/video-how-to-make-anti-inflammatory-golden-milk/>)

Note \*: **Oxidative stress** is the imbalance between free radicals and antioxidants in our body. When there are more free radicals, they can cause damage to fatty tissue, DNA, and proteins in our body which can lead to a vast number of diseases and premature aging. Some sources of free radicals that lead to oxidative stress:

- ◆ Ozone
- ◆ Certain pesticides and cleaners
- ◆ Cigarette smoke
- ◆ Radiation
- ◆ Pollution
- ◆ A diet high in sugar, fat, and alcohol also contribute to free radical production.



Resources: Healthline.com; nutritionfacts.org; health.online/health-wellness



## Easy Turmeric Eggplant Curry

Eggplants shine like the superstars they are in this really simple dish. Great for those new to curries, this foolproof recipe couldn't be easier—it's just one pot on the stove and ready in under 45 minutes. Win! Make a big pot on a Sunday night and you've easily got lunch or dinner for five days! Serve it with red beet kimchi and avocado. Throw it onto a wrap for a curry burrito. Or enjoy with steamed veggies and a favorite whole grain. There are so many ways to enjoy this fantastic, yet light, dish.

Makes 4 servings in under 45 minutes.

### INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 1 large eggplant
- ◆ ½ red onion, chopped
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ◆ 3 carrots, peeled and chopped
- ◆ 1 cup white button mushrooms, chopped
- ◆ 3 tomatoes, roughly chopped
- ◆ 3 teaspoons turmeric
- ◆ 1 teaspoon ginger
- ◆ 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- ◆ 1½ cups dried red lentils
- ◆ 1 (15-ounce) can light coconut milk
- ◆ 2½ cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 2 cups chopped kale leaves
- ◆ Salt to taste
- ◆ 2 cups cooked quinoa or brown rice

*Recipe from Forks over Knives*



### OPTIONAL TOPPINGS

- ◆ A handful of chopped cilantro
- ◆ Avocado
- ◆ Beet kimchi or red cabbage kraut

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 450°F.
2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. Cut the eggplant in thirds lengthwise, place on the prepared baking sheet, and bake for about 15 minutes while you prep the other ingredients.
3. When there's about 5 minutes left on the timer for the eggplant, heat a large pot over medium low to medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, and carrots and sauté for 2 to 5 minutes, or until the onions start to turn brown and translucent. Add water 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time as needed, to keep the vegetables from sticking to the pan.
4. Remove the eggplant from the oven, let it cool a bit since it'll be pretty hot, and roughly chop into large pieces.
5. Add the chopped eggplant, mushrooms, tomatoes, turmeric, ginger, and red pepper flakes to the pot and sauté for about 5 minutes, or until the mushrooms get nice and soft.
6. Next, add the lentils, coconut milk, and vegetable broth and stir. Bring the pot to a boil, then reduce heat, cover with a lid, and simmer for about 10 minutes.
7. Add the kale, stir, and cook, uncovered, for an additional 5 minutes. Taste and add salt if you think it needs it.
8. Top with optional toppings and serve with quinoa or brown rice!

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*As a Certified Health and Wellness Coach (NBC-HWC), I can help you tackle these lifestyle challenges keeping you from living the life you want. Working as your advocate to help keep you accountable to yourself, you will see that making those changes most important to you are within your reach. It's about tapping into your inner wisdom; sometimes it takes a little guidance to help you see that. Reach out to me via email or phone to discuss if coaching might be a option for you. (Group or one-on-one coaching options available. Great for team building too!)*