

Alzheimer's disease

What is Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia in the UK. The term 'dementia' refers to a set of symptoms caused by diseases that affect the brain and lead to a loss of nerve cells.

It's this damage to nerve cells that cause the characteristics of dementia, such as: memory loss, poor judgement and confusion.

Although age is a risk factor, dementia is not a natural part of ageing. Some people can develop the condition earlier in life, this is known as *early onset dementia*.

Dementia is a progressive condition and currently there is no cure or treatments that can slow or stop the spread of the associated diseases.

1M+

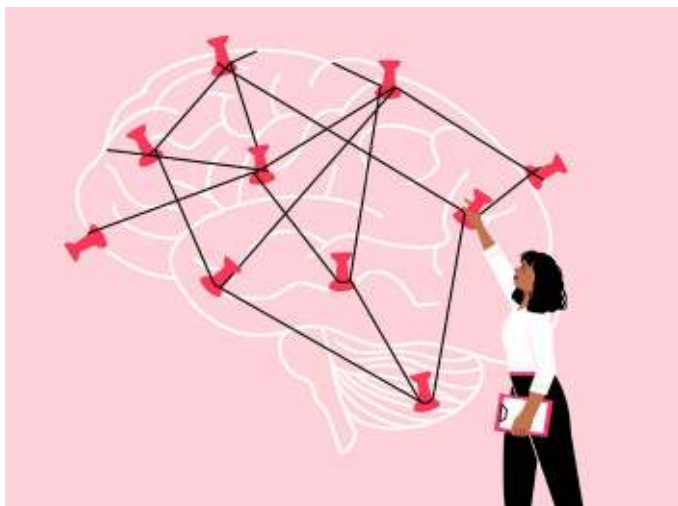
people expected to be living with dementia in the UK by 2024.

42K

people under the age of 65 have dementia in the UK.



It's estimated that one in three people will care for a person with dementia in their lifetime - of which 50% will be employed. It's thought around 66,000 people have already cut their working hours, whilst 50,000 people have left work altogether.



What are the risk factors and symptoms?

The exact cause is not fully understood, but associated **risk factors** can include: increasing age, a family history of the condition, untreated depression, lifestyle factors and conditions associated with cardiovascular disease.

Common **symptoms** of Alzheimer's disease include:

- **Memory loss**
- **Struggling to follow conversations**
- **Difficulties with concentration**
- **Confusion**
- **Trouble completing routine daily tasks**
- **Changes in mood**

Are there any preventative measures?

Although we currently don't know how to prevent Alzheimer's disease, there are healthy lifestyle habits you can adopt to help reduce your risk:

- **Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease** - this includes stopping smoking, limiting alcohol, eating a balanced diet and regular exercise.
- **Keeping mentally and socially active** - some evidence suggests rates of dementia are lower in those that remain mentally and socially active.

Further support

For further support visit **NHS**, **Alzheimer's Research UK**, **Alzheimer's Society** and **Dementia UK**.

If you're worried and think you may have symptoms it's best to see your GP. It's worth highlighting that memory problems can be caused by a range of other conditions too, such as stress, medicines or hormonal disturbances.

Sources: Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's Research UK, NHS, Action for Carers