

November 2019

1. New research from Japan has found that people whose blood contains higher levels of trans fats have a 52-74% higher risk of developing dementia. The study looked at data collected from over 1600 people aged 60+ years and followed up over a ten year period. Participants also completed questionnaires about their overall diets, which enabled researchers to assess which foods were more likely to affect blood trans fats. Sweet pastries, margarine, confectionery and croissants were among the foods listed as high-risk foods.
[Read more >>](#)
2. By assessing the way in which people walk, researchers believe they may be able to detect and diagnose dementia earlier and with more accuracy, before signs of the disease first appear. People with dementia were found to have unique walking patterns, with slower and shorter steps and more time where both feet were on the ground compared with control subjects, with people diagnosed with Lewy Body dementia showing the most asymmetrical and variable steps.
[Read more >>](#)
3. A home-based music therapy program aims to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia. The Homeside program uses music to stimulate autobiographical recall and evoke positive emotions, giving carers a drug-free management strategy, and is suitable for people of all cultures / backgrounds. Many people living with dementia are cared for at home, with caregivers reporting they feel stressed, both physically and mentally. Using the music therapy model, caregivers are able to reduce stress for all parties, and regain a sense of calm in the home.
[Read more >>](#)
4. Researchers in the U.S. have discovered that certain personality traits are linked with lower risk of dementia. People who are socially sensitive, calm, tidy, cultured and mature, with a lower neuroticism score, were less likely to have developed dementia by the age of 70. Socioeconomic status was also a factor, but researchers believe a calm personality could offset the strain of living in a degree of poverty and other forms of stress (which would normally increase long-term dementia risk).
[Read more >>](#)

5. A poll, conducted in the UK, has shown that the simple practice of care staff switching to pyjamas (or uniforms that resemble pyjamas) can help improve sleep patterns in people living with dementia in residential care. Over 2,600 care home owners were polled to ascertain how often this initiative was being introduced and whether it was found to be successful. Almost 60% of those polled endorsed the wearing of pyjamas by night staff.

[Read more >>](#)

6. A team of scientists in San Francisco are studying the progression of atrophy patterns of Frontotemporal Dementia, to examine how the disease moves through the brain. The neurodegeneration appears to “jump” from one area of the brain to another, rather than spread evenly like the growth of a tumour. Researchers were able to predict where atrophy would spread over a one year period, measuring synaptic connections between the start of the damage and the area to which it travelled, as well as looking at the number of already atrophied brain areas connected to one main, given brain area. It is hoped these findings will help scientists develop strategies for targeting predicted disease sites.

[Read more >>](#)

7. Poor cardiovascular health is linked to increased risk of dementia in later life, according to research from the U.S. Almost 8,000 people were part of the study, which looked at cardiovascular health and lifestyle factors such as physical activity, smoking, blood sugar levels and cholesterol. People with intermediate or optimal cardiovascular health scores at age 50 had a larger brain volume two decades later than those whose scores were poor.

[Read more >>](#)

8. Weill Cornell Medicine has released findings from its study into high salt diets and risk of dementia. They found that consuming large amounts of sodium can trigger reactions in the brain that may lead to reduced levels of cognition and a higher risk of dementia. The main factor appears to be nitric oxide, a compound produced by the body which dilates blood vessels and improves blood flow. A high salt diet may cause levels of the compound to drop, causing instability in tau proteins in the brain. Tau accumulation is linked with the development of dementia.

[Read more >>](#)