

Educating Australians About Dementia Risk Reduction

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Research Fellow

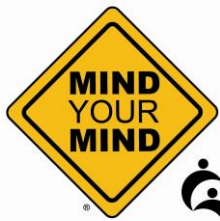
Alzheimer's Australia Vic

Dementia Collaborative Research Centre: Early Detection and Prevention

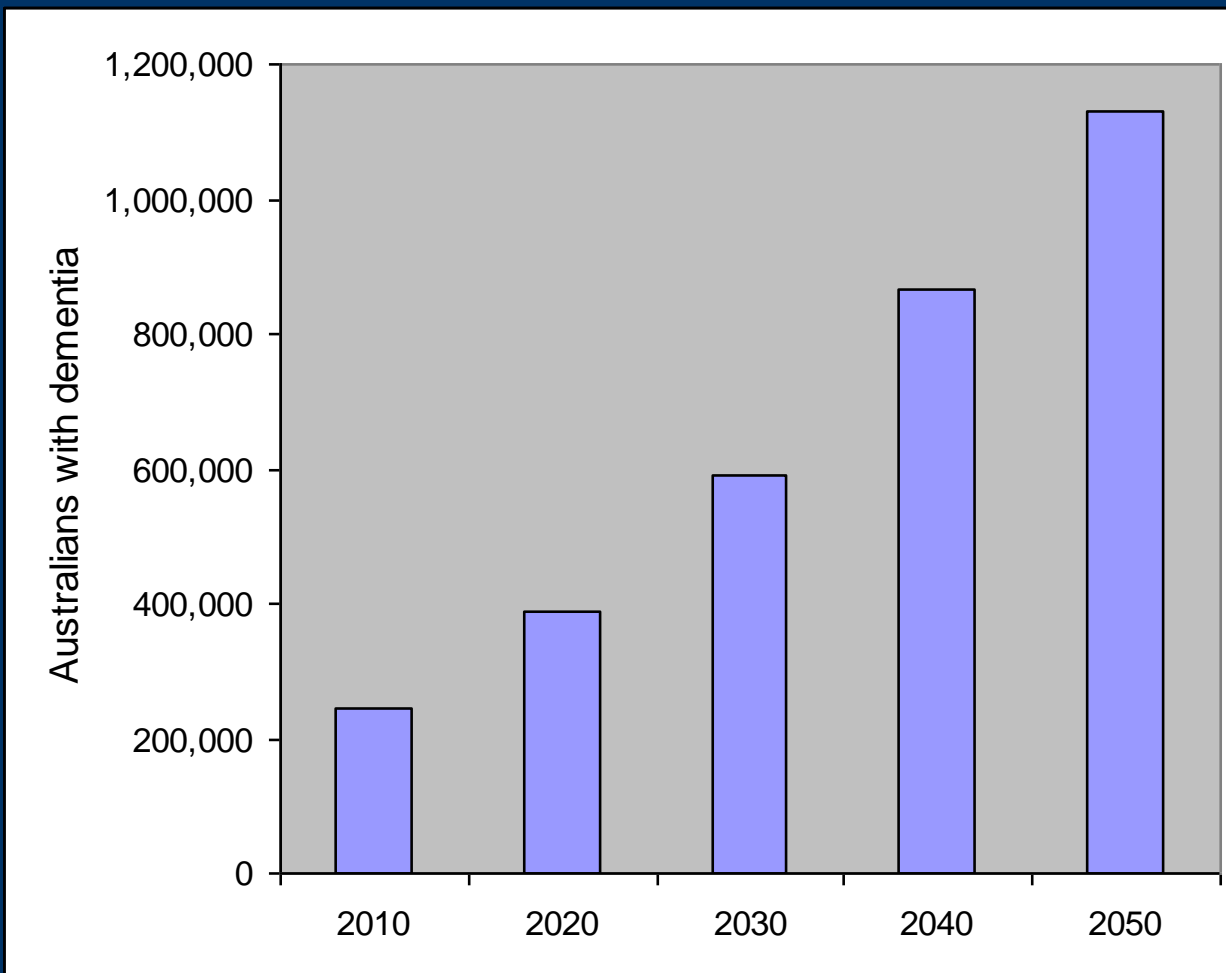


An Australian Government Initiative





Dementia Prevalence



Access Economics, 2009

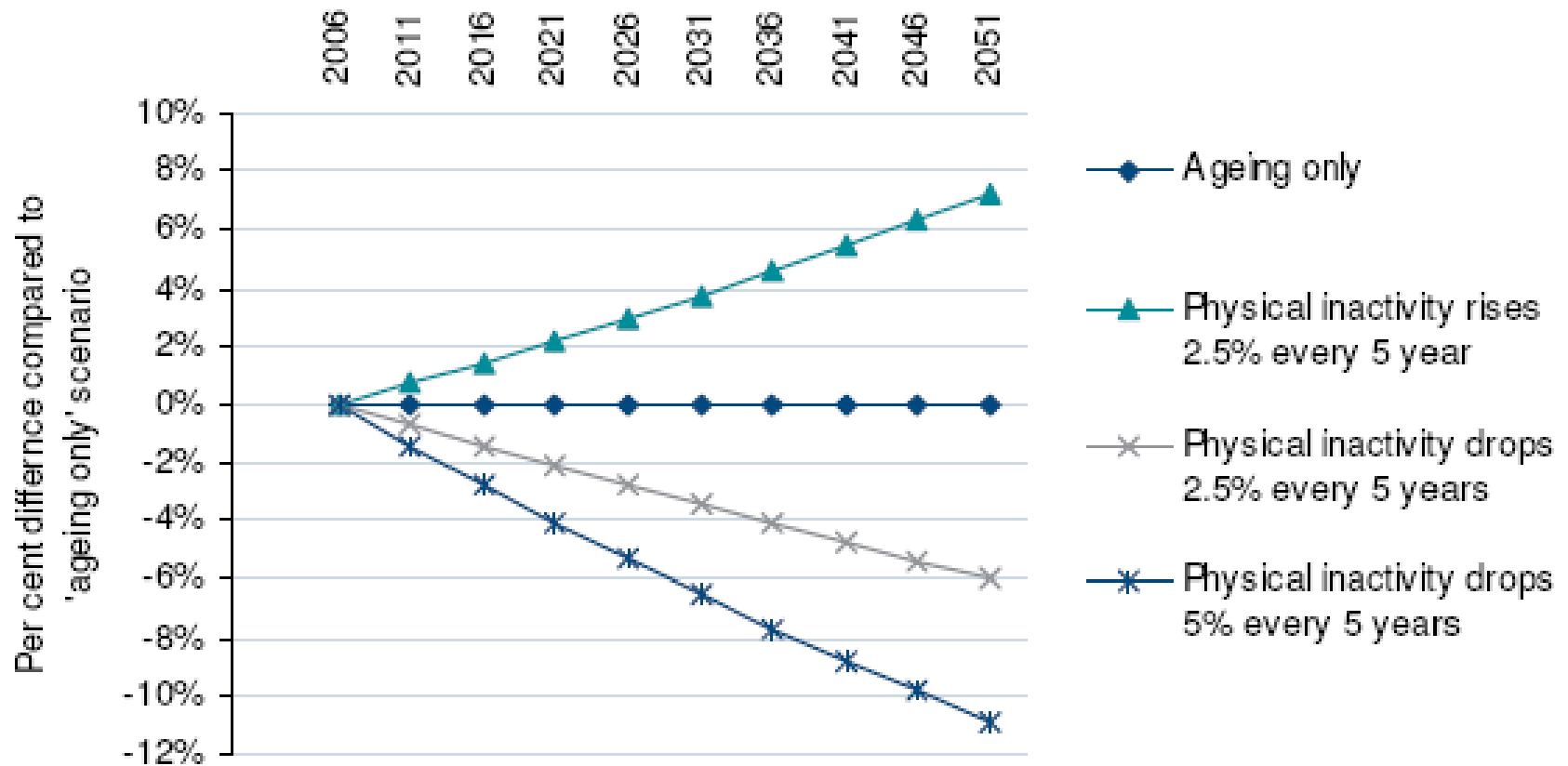


The Dementia Epidemic

- ◆ In 2010 257,000 Australians have dementia
- ◆ This will increase to 592,000 in 2030 and 1,131,00 in 2050
- ◆ Dementia is the leading cause of disability in older Australians (≥ 65 years)
- ◆ By the 2060s, spending on dementia will be \$83 billion, more than any other health condition
- ◆ Dementia is incurable
- ◆ Preventative approaches may curb the epidemic



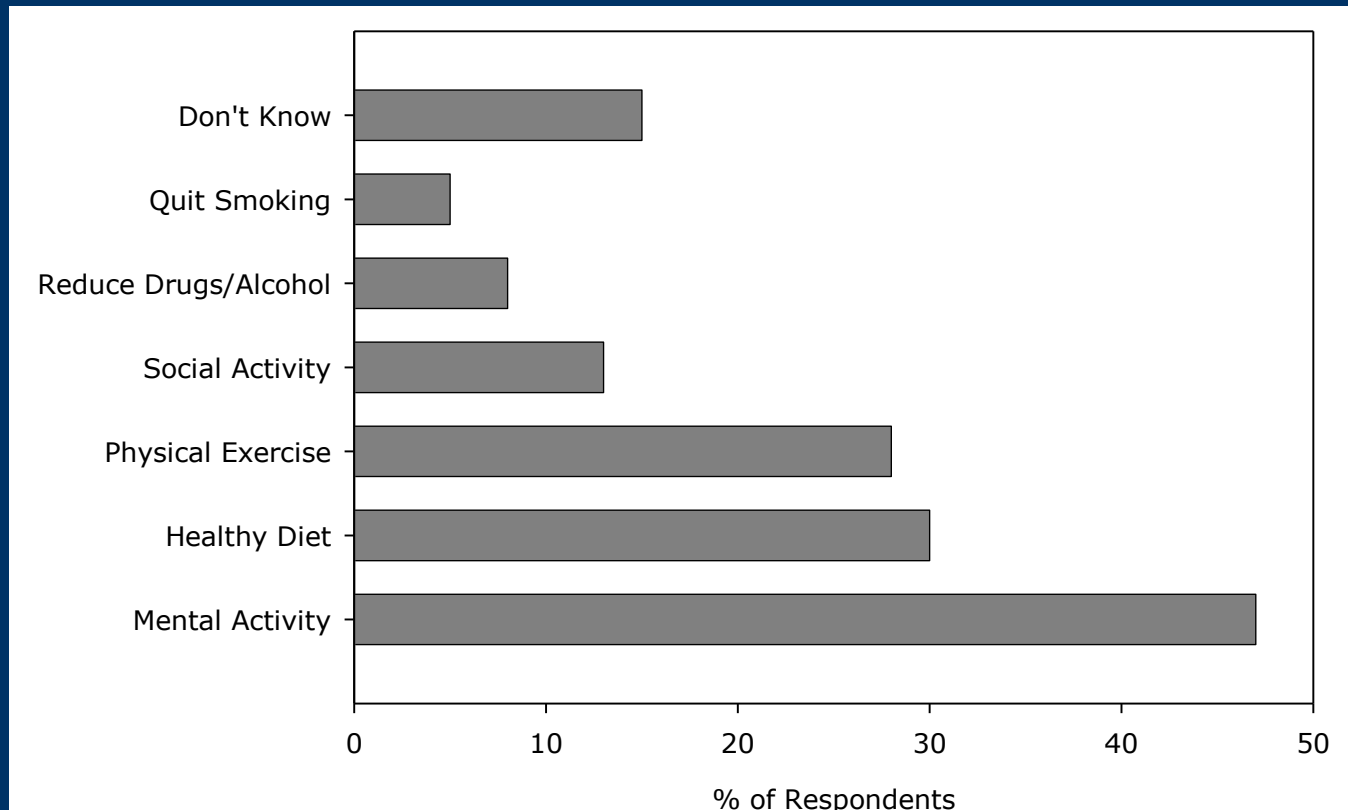
Impact of Prevention





Public Awareness

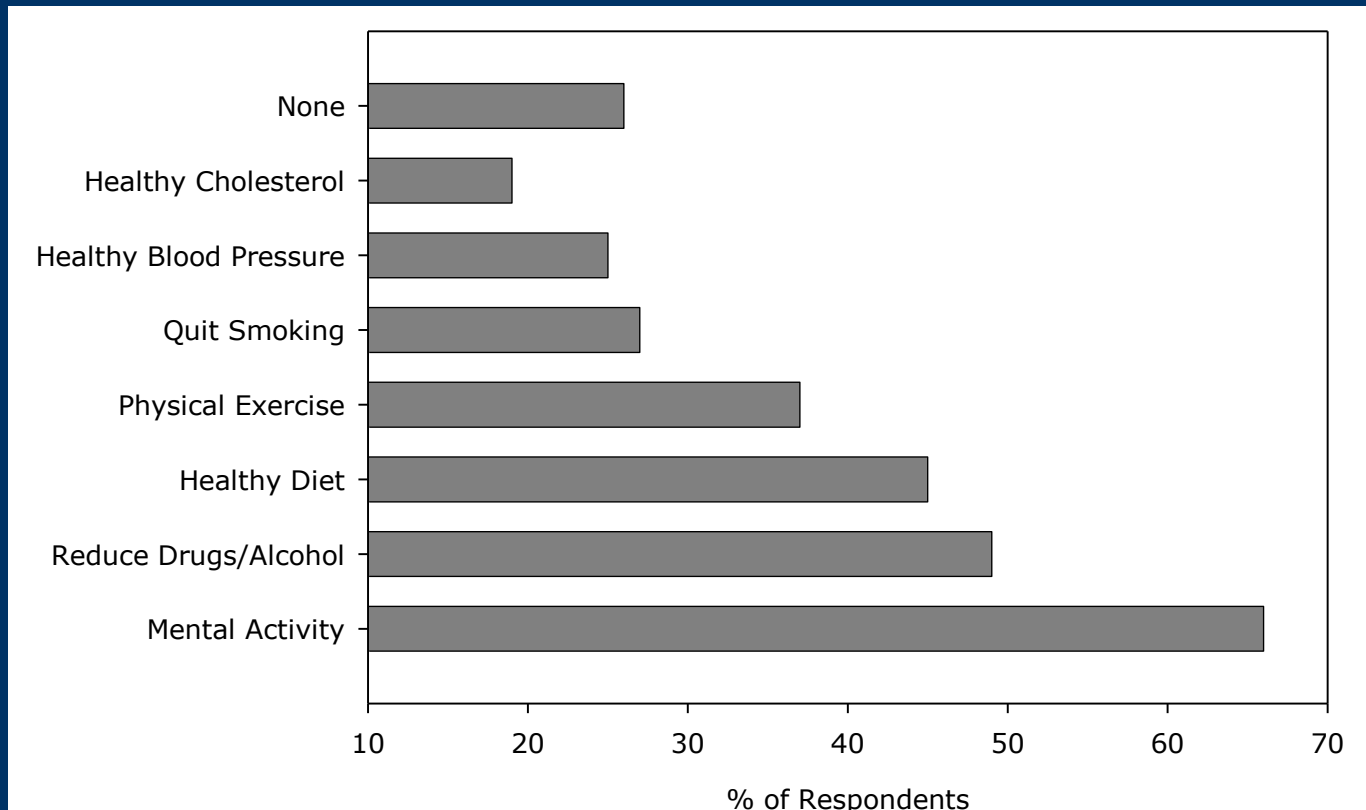
How can dementia risk be reduced? (Farrow, 2008)





Public Awareness

Which of these strategies would reduce dementia risk?
(Farrow, 2008)





Public Awareness

- ◆ Only half of Australian adults believe dementia risk can be reduced
- ◆ Mental activity is seen as the most plausible protective factor
- ◆ Most people lack knowledge of the link between dementia risk and vascular risk factors
- ◆ Most people are not making lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of dementia

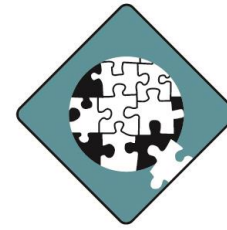


Mind your Mind

Alzheimer's Australia's Dementia Risk Reduction Program



7 signposts to dementia risk reduction



Mind your
Brain

- ◆ Recommendation: Challenge your brain with mentally stimulating activity & new learning
- ◆ Activities should be:
 - ◆ varied
 - ◆ done frequently
 - ◆ challenging for you
 - ◆ enjoyable

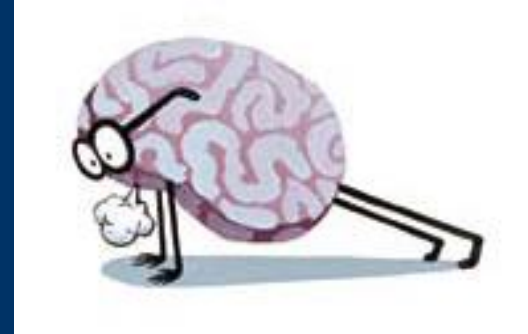


Image courtesy of Simon Letch, 2009



Mind your
Diet

- ◆ Evidence: unsaturated vs saturated fats, omega-3, antioxidants, vitamins
- ◆ Recommendation: Follow healthy eating guidelines
- ◆ Include
 - ◆ vegetables, fruit, legumes, nuts, wholegrain cereals
 - ◆ fish, lean meat, eggs, reduced fat dairy & soy foods
 - ◆ oils such as canola, olive, sunflower, flaxseed
- ◆ Always discuss supplement use with doctor



- ◆ Recommendation: Follow national physical activity guidelines
- ◆ Be active every day – build it into your day
- ◆ Aim for at least 30 minutes each day
- ◆ Choose a variety of activities
- ◆ Choose activities you enjoy





Alzheimer's
Australia
Living with dementia



Mind your Health Checks

- ◆ Increased risk of dementia with high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity – at mid life
- ◆ Treatment of high blood pressure shown to reduce dementia risk
- ◆ Treatment of other vascular risk factors likely to reduce dementia risk
- ◆ Have regular medical check-ups
- ◆ Treat any problems effectively



Mind your Social Life

- ◆ Lower risk of dementia associated with:
 - ◆ Engaging in more social activities
 - ◆ Having larger social networks
 - ◆ Lower perceived loneliness
- ◆ Be social in ways you enjoy & you feel comfortable with
- ◆ Do activities that combine other Mind your Mind signposts





- ◆ Smoking
 - ◆ If you smoke, quit
 - ◆ Avoid other's tobacco smoke
- ◆ Alcohol
 - ◆ If you drink alcohol, limit to 2 standard drinks on any day
 - ◆ If you don't drink alcohol, no need to start



- ◆ Head injury is a risk factor for dementia
- ◆ Recommendation: Protect your head from injury





Mind your Mind Summary

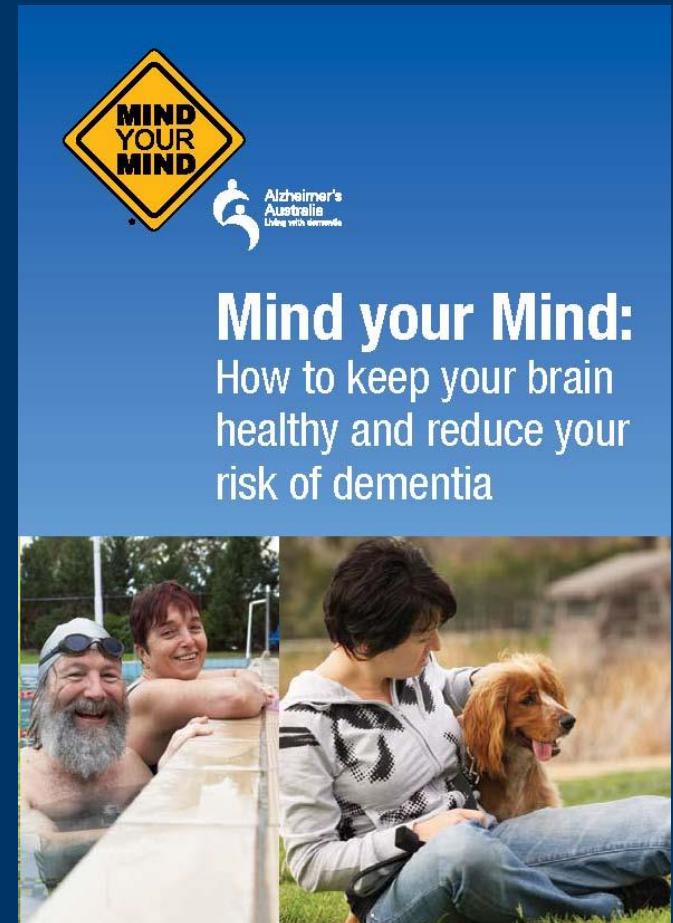
- ◆ The Mind your Mind signposts ARE NOT a guarantee against developing dementia
- ◆ The Mind your Mind signposts are good for overall health at any age
- ◆ For greatest benefit, try to follow all of the signposts





Mind your Mind Resources

- ◆ Brochure
- ◆ Booklet
- ◆ Checklist
- ◆ New website
- ◆ Community presentations
- ◆ Alzheimer's Australia staff training
- ◆ Guides for health professionals





The Future

- ◆ Increasing knowledge does not ensure increasing practice
- ◆ Raise awareness → motivate behaviour change → facilitate behaviour change
- ◆ Links with other preventative health programs
- ◆ Tailored interventions for those at risk of dementia
- ◆ Education programs for health professionals



Further Information

- ◆ National Dementia Helpline
1800 100 500
- ◆ Alzheimer's Australia Website
www.alzheimers.org.au
- ◆ Dr Maree Farrow
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