

NHS Health Check Dementia Component

Prompt resource for Health Care Practitioners

This document is designed to support practitioners having conversations with patients on reducing the risk of dementia during a Health Check. This supplements the NHS Health Check Dementia leaflet (Dementia: Helping your brain to stay healthy <http://www.healthcheck.nhs.uk/document.php?o=327%E2%80%8E>)

Practitioners are asked to include the following key messages in their conversation:

- What is good for the heart is good for the brain
- Dementia is not an inevitable part of ageing – it is caused by diseases of the brain
- Increased risks of cardiovascular disease also increase risk of developing dementia
- Adopting a healthy lifestyle can reduce risk of dementia
- There are local services available to support people to make healthy lifestyle changes

Practitioners may want to use the following key points within the Health Check conversation:

Dementia is a disease, not an inevitable part of ageing

- Dementia affects the way the brain works and makes it difficult to do every day activities.
 - Not just about being forgetful as people may get confused, and it can affect speech and decision making.
 - Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia are the most common forms of dementia.
- (Signpost to NHS Choices <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia-guide/pages/about-dementia.aspx> for more information)

Like cancer, cardiovascular disease and many other conditions, dementia is not inevitable. There are things one can do to reduce the risk of getting these conditions.

- By making changes and adopting a healthier lifestyle people can reduce risk of developing dementia.
- Approximately 30% of cases of Alzheimer's disease may be avoided through adopting healthier lifestyles.

Is the Health Check recipient aware that the following actions can reduce the chance of getting dementia, along with cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes? (HCP to promote positive behaviour change to lifestyle)

- Being physically active every day
- Eating a healthy balanced diet and maintaining a healthy weight
- Not drinking too much alcohol
- Giving up smoking
- Connecting with people around them

There are local services available to support living a healthy lifestyle

- Signpost to local healthy lifestyle services available for person's level of risk and GP practice.

Further information, support and advice about living with dementia or caring for someone with dementia is readily available.

- Signpost to [NHS Choices](#), the Alzheimer's Society for more information on dementia, local resources <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/BranchWebsites> and local service directories <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/local-information/dementia-connect#!/search> and Alzheimer's Research UK for more information around risk <http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org/about-dementia/helpful-information/reducing-the-risk/>

