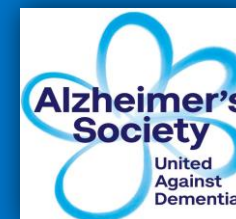


Helping your brain to stay healthy

The dementia component of the NHS Health Check

A tool for NHS Health Check
trainers



‘What is good for your heart is good for your brain’

‘Dementia is not a normal part of ageing - it is caused by diseases of the brain’

This slide deck is for trainers of the NHS Health Check

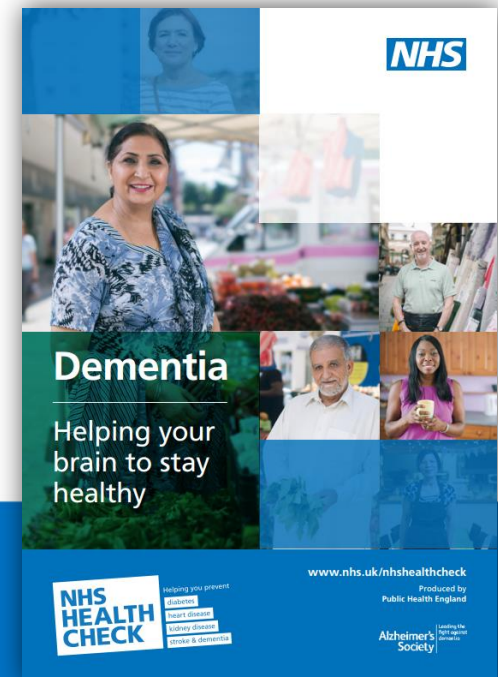
This resource is intended to be incorporated into, or to support current NHS Health Check training materials.

What do the following slides cover?

- What is the dementia component of the NHS Health Check
- Why dementia risk reduction is part of the NHS Health Check
- How to introduce dementia as part of NHS Health Check training

The dementia component

- ‘What is good for your heart is good for your brain’
- A short conversation that fits within wider discussions about lifestyle, health and cardiovascular messaging.
- Who is it for? All people who receive an NHS Health Check (age 40-74)
- Focus on:
 - How to reduce risk of developing dementia
 - Raising awareness of dementia
 - Signposting to further information



What the dementia component is not..

It is not...

- A method of screening or testing for signs and symptoms of dementia
- A component that requires practitioners to perform a clinical test

Did you know?

- Dementia is not a normal part of ageing - it is caused by diseases of the brain
- Dementia is an umbrella term for a group of diseases including Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia and dementia with Lewy bodies
- Dementia is a debilitating condition with no known cure that can have devastating effects
- Prevalence of dementia is higher amongst women, BAME groups and people with learning disabilities

Did you know...

- 1 in 3 people with dementia do not have a diagnosis
- 1 in 3 people will care for someone with dementia in their lifetime
- Dementia is the most feared condition for the over 55s



Why is the dementia component important?

- A third of cases of Alzheimer's disease may be avoidable by modifying lifestyle.
- Currently only 25% of the general public believe it is possible to reduce their risk of dementia.
- Evaluation of the NHS Health Check has shown people attending want to know about dementia.
- 'What is good for your heart is good for your brain' – the risk factors for cardiovascular disease within the NHS Health Check are also risk factors for dementia.

Why you might not want to talk about dementia

- Dementia is a complex condition.
- You may feel you don't know much about it.
- There is still stigma, fear and lack of understanding among the general public.
- Dementia is different to other components of the NHS Health Check as there isn't a test or result to structure the conversation.
- Some cultures and communities do not recognise dementia as a condition.

What information do you need to provide and promote?

- ‘What is good for your heart is good for your brain’ and ‘Dementia is not a normal part of ageing’
- There are ways to reduce the risk of developing dementia. Many of these are common to cardiovascular risk.
- Actions to reduce the risk of developing dementia are:
 - Regular exercise
 - Not smoking
 - Healthy balanced diet
 - Maintaining a healthy weight
 - Not drinking too much
 - Keeping socially and mentally active

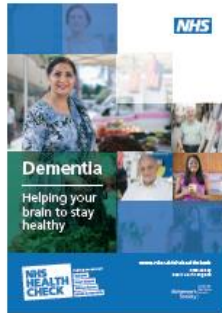


What information do you need to provide and promote?

- Signs of dementia are not limited to memory loss but may include:
 - Difficulties with familiar tasks
 - Problems following conversations
 - Changes in mood and personality
- Managing blood pressure, depression and diabetes also helps to reduce the risk of dementia.
- For further information people receiving an NHS Health Check should be directed to Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's Research UK or their local GP.

How might you go about it?

- The 'Dementia – Helping your brain to stay healthy' leaflet is an ideal tool to help structure a conversation.
- See the leaflet walk through guide for practitioners on the NHS Health Check website



How to use the NHS Health Check dementia leaflet in your appointments

This leaflet should be available to use in every NHS Health Check appointment with any client aged 65-74 years old.

You can use it to help structure your conversation about dementia with a client.

Reducing the risk of developing dementia
A great way to introduce the topic when talking about wider cardiovascular health - what is good for your heart is good for your brain

What is dementia?
This explains that dementia is an umbrella term for several diseases which affect the way the brain works

Myths about dementia
Useful if you get any tricky questions

Symptoms of dementia
Lists common symptoms of dementia

You can order more leaflets at the Department of Health Orderline: <https://www.orderline.dh.gov.uk> and quote 2904520

Why have we written this leaflet?

The NHS wants to help keep people healthy, that could lower their chances of getting dementia – sometimes caused by things a brain does. Many people don't know that what they do every day can help keep a healthy brain. The good news is that it's never too late to help.

What is dementia?

Dementia affects the way the brain normally works. This makes it difficult to do things that you used to do easily. For example, you may have trouble remembering names or faces, or you may have trouble with your judgement.

There are different types of dementia, but most people who get it have Alzheimer's disease. It's the most common type of dementia.

Dementia affects about 850,000 people in the UK. This is an increase in the number of people who have dementia. Most older people do not get dementia. But those people who are diagnosed with dementia are usually over 65. It's not clear what causes dementia, but it's thought that there are several factors that can lead to dementia. Some of these factors are:

Myths about dementia

Myth 1: Dementia is inevitable.
If you are diagnosed with dementia, it's not always true that you will have dementia. Some people who are diagnosed with dementia do not have dementia. It's important to talk to your doctor about your diagnosis.

Myth 2: Dementia is a punishment.
Dementia is not a punishment. It's a disease that can affect anyone, regardless of how good a person they are.

Myth 3: Dementia is only for old people.
Dementia can affect people of any age. It's not just a disease of old age.

Myth 4: Dementia is a sign of weakness.
Dementia is not a sign of weakness. It's a disease that can affect anyone, regardless of how strong they are.

Myth 5: Dementia is a sign of madness.
Dementia is not a sign of madness. It's a disease that can affect anyone, regardless of how sane they are.

Myth 1: Dementia is inevitable.

For dementia to be inevitable, that would mean that everyone who is diagnosed with dementia will have dementia. This is not true. Some people who are diagnosed with dementia do not have dementia. It's important to talk to your doctor about your diagnosis.

Myth 2: Dementia is a punishment.

Dementia is not a punishment. It's a disease that can affect anyone, regardless of how good a person they are.

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Controlling your mood

For example, feeling sad, stressed or angry. If you have any of these symptoms, you should talk to your doctor. An appointment with your doctor can help you to control your mood.

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Be physically active

Being physically active will help reduce your risk of dementia. It will also help to keep your heart, lungs and muscles healthy. Aim to be active every day for 15 minutes or more. The risk will be even higher if you are active for 30 minutes or more.

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Don't drink too much alcohol

There are no safe levels for drinking alcohol. Drinking alcohol can harm your brain. Drinking in high levels over time can cause brain damage. It's important to talk to your doctor about your alcohol consumption.

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Eat healthily and maintain a healthy weight

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Give up smoking

Smoking causes your risk of dementia to increase. Smoking is very harmful to the heart, lungs and the rest of your body. It can also affect the blood vessels in the brain. It's important to talk to your doctor about your smoking.

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Managing your health

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How might you go about it?

Video resources

- [Videos](#) – how to do it well
 - A practice example
 - A walk through the dementia leaflet
 - What the dementia component is not
- Angela Rippon explains things we can do in midlife to reduce dementia risk in this [video](#)

What should be completed by the end of the NHS Health Check?

- Dementia risk reduction has been part of the conversation
- The person has been given the dementia [leaflet](#)
- The link made between the risk factors for cardiovascular health and dementia
- Chance to answer any questions on dementia
- Signposted to third sector or local healthy lifestyle groups



Further links and resources

- Dementia NHS Health Check [leaflet](#)
- NHS Health Check website dementia [page](#)
- References and sources of statistics in this document ([factsheet](#))
- Health Education England E-learning for Healthcare [resources](#) on dementia
- [HEE Person centred care - dementia](#)
- Dementia Core Skills Education and Training [Framework](#) (see from p.21)
- [NHS Choices](#)
- [Dementia Connect](#) – Alzheimer’s Society directory of local dementia services
- [‘Reducing the risk’](#) – Alzheimer’s Research UK leaflet on dementia risk reduction.
- [Health matters](#): midlife approaches to reduce dementia risk – Public Health England
- [Dementia-Reducing Your Risk](#)- Alzheimer’s Society booklet