

The United States Needs a National Alzheimer's Prevention Goal Because Cognitive Decline is Not Inevitable

The United States must set an ambitious national goal to prevent Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD).

- Evidence points to the fact that **40% or more of dementia cases could be prevented** or delayed.
- Even a five-year delay in ADRD onset could **cut dementia prevalence in half and save \$599 billion by 2050**.
- **Dementia is tightly connected to other chronic conditions**. A plan to prevent dementia also addresses other health challenges such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, depression, brain injury, and hearing loss.
- **Alzheimer's is an urgent health equity challenge**. Without action, Latinos and Black Americans will see the largest increases in ADRD between 2015 and 2060.

Communities of color and women will benefit the most from an effective prevention goal.

Black Americans are about twice as likely to have Alzheimer's or other dementias as White Americans, and Latinos are about one and one-half times more likely. In addition, 65 percent of people living with Alzheimer's are women.

Why should the U.S. set a national Alzheimer's prevention goal?

The science of prevention has continued to advance as we learn more about Alzheimer's disease. We now know that **cognitive decline is not an inevitable part of aging**.

For example, according to a July 2020 Lancet Commission report, **up to 40 percent of dementia cases may be slowed or prevented by the management of 12 modifiable risk factors**, including smoking, excess alcohol consumption, lack of sleep, diabetes, hypertension, and others.

Setting a prevention goal will take bold leadership from national leaders in both the public and private sectors. The goal must be ambitious, achievable, time-bound - and focus on healthcare equity that recognizes the disproportionate impact ADRD has on communities of color and women.

How can Congress support creation of a national Alzheimer's prevention goal?

Encourage the Secretary of Health and Human Services to prioritize dementia risk reduction and establish a national, measurable, time-bound impact goal to reduce the prevalence of dementia and implement a plan to achieve it.

Incentivize early intervention by improving awareness and access to a structured cognitive assessment utilizing a validated tool for all Medicare beneficiaries.

Funding for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program to \$60 million. To truly reduce the number of people impacted by Alzheimer's our nation must strengthen its public health infrastructure in communities across the country, particularly in underserved communities.

Fund continued Alzheimer's research. Our nation cannot waver from its drive to find effective interventions to prevent and treat ADRD. Additional funding is needed for research that promises disease-modifying drug therapies, enhances our knowledge of risk-factors, supports development of biomarker tests, and advances health equity for people with a higher risk of developing ADRD.

Support for a National Goal

UsAgainstAlzheimer's leads an ever-expanding coalition of over 190 patient advocacy groups, medical and provider associations, public policy organizations, and consumer and community groups that have united around the creation and implementation of a national, time-bound prevention goal for Alzheimer's and related dementias to be adopted by the federal government to reduce Alzheimer's prevalence in the United States. These groups include the American Heart Association, American Federation of Teachers, YMCA of the USA, UnidosUS, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, National Urban League, Volunteers of America, Trust for America's Health and many others. To learn more, click [here](#).

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