



Diet and Dementia:

Changes in the brain can occur years before the first symptoms of Alzheimer's appear. This may suggest there is a window of opportunity to prevent or delay dementia development. There are risk factors that we can't change such as genetics and age. However, we can control lifestyle choices such as diet, exercise, and cognitive training.

Eating a certain diet affects biological mechanisms such as inflammation and oxidative stress. Prepare a balanced diet with fresh vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and lean meats. Limit foods that are high in saturated fat and cholesterol. Limit the use of salt and foods that are high in sodium. Limit foods that do not provide any nutritional value.

As Alzheimer's disease progresses, people tend to lose their appetite and weight loss and dehydration are a concern. Between meal nutritional supplements may be beneficial to add calories and nutrients. Encourage fluid intake in small amounts frequently throughout the day and add foods that have a higher water content to meals.

View mealtimes as an opportunity for social interaction with friends and family. Eating takes longer, have patience, and allow plenty of time. Serve meals in a familiar place, keep mealtimes consistent to what the person is used to. Don't force a person to have a meal if their past routine did not include that meal.

Mediterranean Diet:

- The Mediterranean diet emphasizes fresh fruit, vegetables, legumes, fish & other seafood, whole grains, unsaturated fats such as olive oil, and low intake of red meat, eggs, and sweets.

Individual Foods:

- Individual foods that have anti-inflammatory properties may have potential cognitive benefits. Some of these foods include leafy greens such as spinach and kale, broccoli, avocados, curcumin found in turmeric.
- Omega 3, 6, vitamin E, folate, vitamin B6, and magnesium in nuts such as almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, and walnuts.
- Superfoods that are packed with antioxidants such as cranberries, acai berries, blueberries, garlic, and ginger.
- A diet regular with fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, and sardines is associated with higher cognitive function and slows the cognitive decline with age.
- Keep the physician updated on all changes a person is experiencing.