

Australian statistics

- Dementia is the **second leading cause of death** of Australians.¹
- Dementia is the **leading cause of death** for women.²
- In 2022, there are an **estimated 487,500 Australians** living with dementia. Without a medical breakthrough, the number of people with dementia is expected **to increase to 1,076,000 by 2058**.³
- In 2022, there were an **estimated 28,800 people** with younger onset dementia, expected to rise to **29,350 people by 2028** and **41,250 people by 2058**. This can include people in their 30s, 40s and 50s.⁴
- In 2021, it is estimated that **almost 1.6 million** people in Australia are involved in the care of someone living with dementia.⁵
- Approximately **70% of people with dementia** live in the community.⁶
- **More than two-thirds** (68.1%) of aged care residents have moderate to severe cognitive impairment.⁷

Dementia risk reduction

Being brain healthy is relevant at any age, whether you are young, old or in between. However, it is particularly important once you reach middle age as this is when changes start to occur in the brain.

While we cannot change getting older, genetics or family history, scientific research suggests that changing certain health and lifestyle habits may make a big difference to reducing or delaying your risk of developing dementia.

There are 12 recommendations for reducing risk for cognitive decline released by the World Health Organisation:⁸

1. Be physically active
2. stop smoking
3. eat a balanced diet, like the Mediterranean diet
4. drink alcohol in moderation
5. cognitive training
6. be socially active
7. look after your weight
8. manage any hypertension
9. manage any diabetes
10. manage any cholesterol
11. manage depression
12. look after your hearing and manage hearing loss.

What is dementia?

Dementia is the term used to describe the symptoms of a large group of illnesses which cause a progressive decline in a person's functioning. It is a broad term used to describe a loss of memory, intellect, rationality, social skills and physical functioning. There are **many types of dementia** including Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, frontotemporal dementia and Lewy body disease. Dementia can happen to anybody, but it is more common after the age of 65.

Who is Dementia Australia?

Dementia Australia is the source of trusted information, education and services for the estimated half a million Australians living with dementia, and the almost 1.6 million people involved in their care. We advocate for positive change and support vital research. We are here to support people impacted by dementia, and to enable them to live as well as possible.

No matter how you are impacted by dementia or who you are, we are here for you.

Dementia prevalence in Australia

The prevalence data research for dementia in Australia is conducted and regularly updated by Dementia Australia. Detailed information about dementia prevalence can be found at dementia.org.au/information/statistics/prevalence-data.

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020) Causes of Death, Australia, 2019 (cat. No. 3303.0)
2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Dementia Snapshot, July 2020
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/dementia>
3. Dementia Australia (2018) Dementia Prevalence Data 2018-2058, commissioned research undertaken by NATSEM, University of Canberra
4. Dementia Australia (2018) Dementia Prevalence Data 2018-2058, commissioned research undertaken by NATSEM, University of Canberra
5. Based on Dementia Australia's analysis of the following publications – M.Kostas et al. (2017) National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey – The Aged Care Workforce, 2016, Department of Health; Dementia Australia (2018) Dementia Prevalence Data 2018-2058, commissioned research undertaken by NATSEM, University of Canberra; Alzheimer's Disease International and Karolinska Institute (2018), Global estimates of informal care, Alzheimer's Disease International; Access Economics (2010) Caring Places: planning for aged care and dementia 2010-2050
6. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2012) Dementia in Australia
7. Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, Research Paper 8 - International and National Quality and Safety Indicators for Aged Care, 2020, p161. <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/research-paper-8-international-and-national-quality-and-safety-indicators-aged-care>
8. World Health Organisation, Risk Reduction of Cognitive Decline and Dementia, 2020.
http://www.who.int/mental_health/neurology/dementia/english_forward_executive_summary_dementia_guidelines.pdf