

# Key facts and statistics

Updated January 2024

## Australian statistics

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- Dementia is the **second leading cause of death** of all Australians<sup>1</sup> and provisional data is showing that dementia will likely soon be the leading cause of death<sup>2</sup>.
- Dementia is the **leading cause of death** for women.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2024 it is estimated there are **more than 421,000 Australians living with all forms of dementia**. Without a medical breakthrough, the number of people with dementia is expected to increase to more than **812,500** by **2054**.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2024, it is estimated there are **almost 29,000 people with younger onset dementia**, expected to rise to **more than 41,000 people by 2054**. This can include people in their 30s, 40s and 50s.<sup>5</sup>
- In 2024, it is estimated that **more than 1.6 million** people in Australia are involved in the care of someone living with dementia.<sup>6</sup>
- **2 in 3** people with dementia are thought to be living in the community.<sup>7</sup>
- **More than two-thirds (68.1%)** of aged care residents have moderate to severe cognitive impairment.<sup>8</sup>

## Dementia risk reduction

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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.

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There are 12 recommendations for reducing risk for cognitive decline released by the World Health Organisation:<sup>9</sup>

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?

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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?

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Dementia Australia is the source of trusted information, education and services for the estimated more than 400,000 Australians living with dementia, and the more than 1.5 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.**

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1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022) Dementia in Australia, AIHW, Australian Government.
  2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
  3. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022) Dementia in Australia, AIHW, Australian Government.
  4. Dementia Australia (2023) Dementia Prevalence Data 2024-2054, commissioned research undertaken by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
  5. Dementia Australia (2023) Dementia Prevalence Data 2024-2054, commissioned research undertaken by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
  6. Based on Dementia Australia's analysis of the following publications - Department of Health and Aged Care, 2020 Aged Care Workforce Census Report, 2020, p. 6; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022) Dementia in Australia, AIHW, Australian Government.
  7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022) Dementia in Australia, AIHW, Australian Government.
  8. See also: Livingston G, Huntley J, Sommerlad A, et al. Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2020 report of the Lancet Commission. The Lancet 2020.
  9. World Health Organisation, Risk Reduction of Cognitive Decline and Dementia, 2020.  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/risk-reduction-of-cognitive-decline-and-dementia>  
See also: Livingston G, Huntley J, Sommerlad A, et al. Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2020 report of the Lancet Commission. The Lancet 2020.

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