

January is ALZHEIMER Awareness Month

Forget me not

Memories for tomorrow

Upon losing his or her car keys, has your spouse ever joked, "I must be getting old!"? It certainly is frustrating to misplace everyday objects or forget our train of thought halfway through a sentence, but there is a big difference between normal memory slip-ups and age-related dementia.

According to the Alzheimer Society of Canada, the number of people living with this condition will double over the next 30 years. It's estimated that the cost burden of dementia will increase from \$15 billion in 2008 to \$153 billion in 2038. In terms of health care, the problem will overwhelm our society economically and socially, as families struggle to deal with affected parents.

Every five minutes someone in Canada develops dementia, which can be delayed through early intervention and preventative care. In January, Alzheimer Awareness Month, Canadians and their governments are invited to increase their awareness of age-related mental deterioration and the rising numbers of people afflicted by it.

The average Canadian can reduce his or her risk by:

- Being socially active
- Making healthy food choices
- Being physically active
- Reducing stress
- Using protective headgear when doing sports or taking part in outdoor winter activities
- Challenging their minds with new tasks at every age
- Avoiding harmful habits such as smoking or excessive alcohol consumption
- Getting adequate sleep
- Seeing their doctors regularly

By being proactive in your brain and body health today, you increase your chances of a long and healthy life.

Dementia is a serious age-related mental deterioration.

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