

The Role of the GP in Dementia Risk Factor Modification. Applying Art to the Science

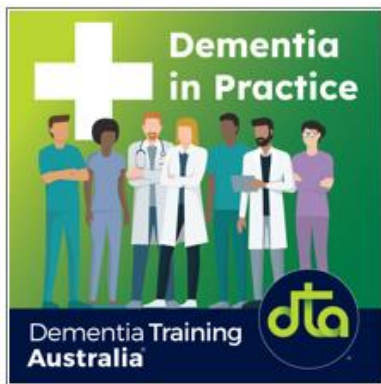
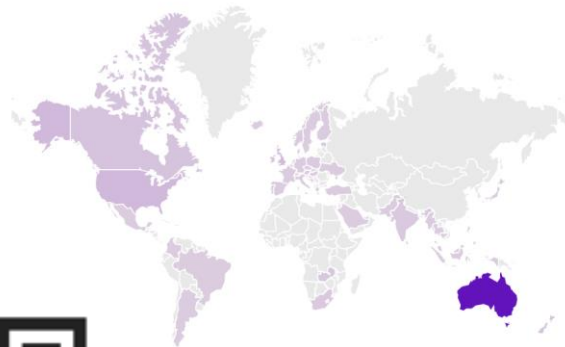
Dr Peter Silberberg
Dr Hilton Koppe
Dementia Training Australia

Dementia Training Australia is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the Dementia Training Program.



DTA GP Education Team Has Been Busy!

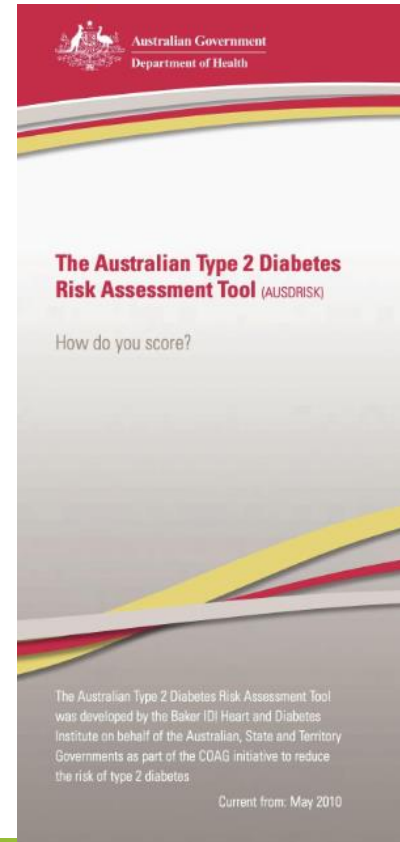
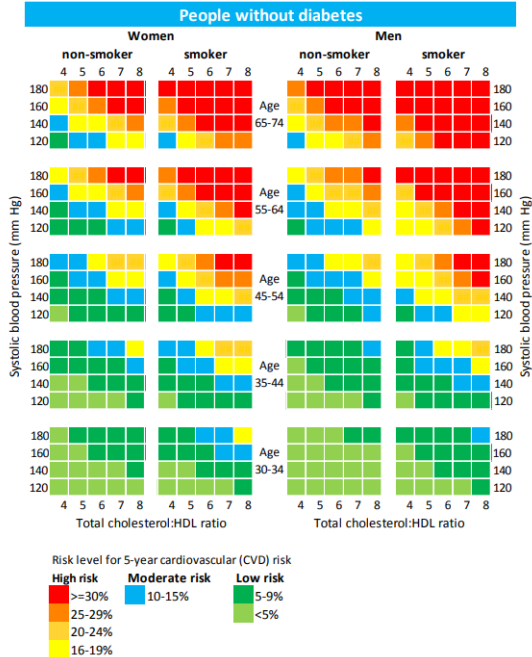
Face-to-face sessions	8,200
Webinars	3,300
Self-directed learning completions	3,500
Dementia in Practice podcast (Australia)	38,000 (30,000 in



To Begin With the End in Mind...

1. It is never too early or too late to intervene with modifiable risk factors.
2. The challenge for clinicians is to take population data and apply it to unique individuals. This requires many skills.
3. All health professionals are well placed to conduct brain health checks
4. Offering a mildly disorienting dilemma can motivate people to change

What about Brain Health Checks?



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Risk Factors for Dementia

Early life

Mid-life

Later life



Quality of education 5%



Hearing impairment 7%



High cholesterol 7%



Depression 3%



Traumatic brain injury 3%



Physical inactivity 2%



Uncorrected visual impairment 2%



Diabetes 2%



Smoking 2%



High blood pressure 2%



Obesity 2%



Excessive alcohol 1%



Social isolation 5%



Air pollution 3%

The percentage figure refers to the reduction in worldwide cases if this risk factor were eliminated. In AUS, a 1% reduction = 4,200 people.

Adapted from the Lancet Standing Commission on Dementia Prevention, Intervention and Care, 2024.

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SYDNEY



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Assess your Dementia Risk

Welcome to the CogDrisk Assessment!

After completing the self-assessment you will be presented with a health profile and information on lifestyle and health behaviours that may improve your health and reduce the dementia risk. Simply press START to begin!

The assessment will take approximately 20 minutes.

START

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PERSONALISED DEMENTIA RISK ASSESSMENT

Date of Assessment: 2024-10-14

Congratulations on completing the dementia risk assessment!

Your CogDrisk dementia score is 19.25

The risk score has been developed using an evidence-based approach (see notes). The risk score ranges from 0 to 36.25, with a higher score indicating higher risk.



Below is your personalised report based on your current health and lifestyle factors.

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START

	Keep up the good work! You reported:	Room for improvement You reported:
Demographic factor		✗ Your highest qualification was secondary education
Medical risk factors	✓ No diabetes	✗ Your weight is in the overweight range
	✓ No prior stroke	✗ Having high cholesterol level
	✓ No atrial fibrillation	✗ Having prior brain injury
		✗ Having hypertension
		✗ Having poor levels of sleep
		✗ Having depressive symptoms
Lifestyle habits and diet	✓ High levels of physical activity	✗ Eating fish less than once a week
	✓ High levels of cognitive engagement	✗ Being a heavy drinker
	✓ High levels of social engagement	
	✓ You do not smoke	
Environmental exposure	✓ No exposure to pesticides	

Brain Health Checks

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No matter what your age is, it is never too late to incorporate healthy lifestyle habits and monitor your health regularly. We recommend the following strategies to reduce the risk of developing dementia which are based on national and international guidelines.

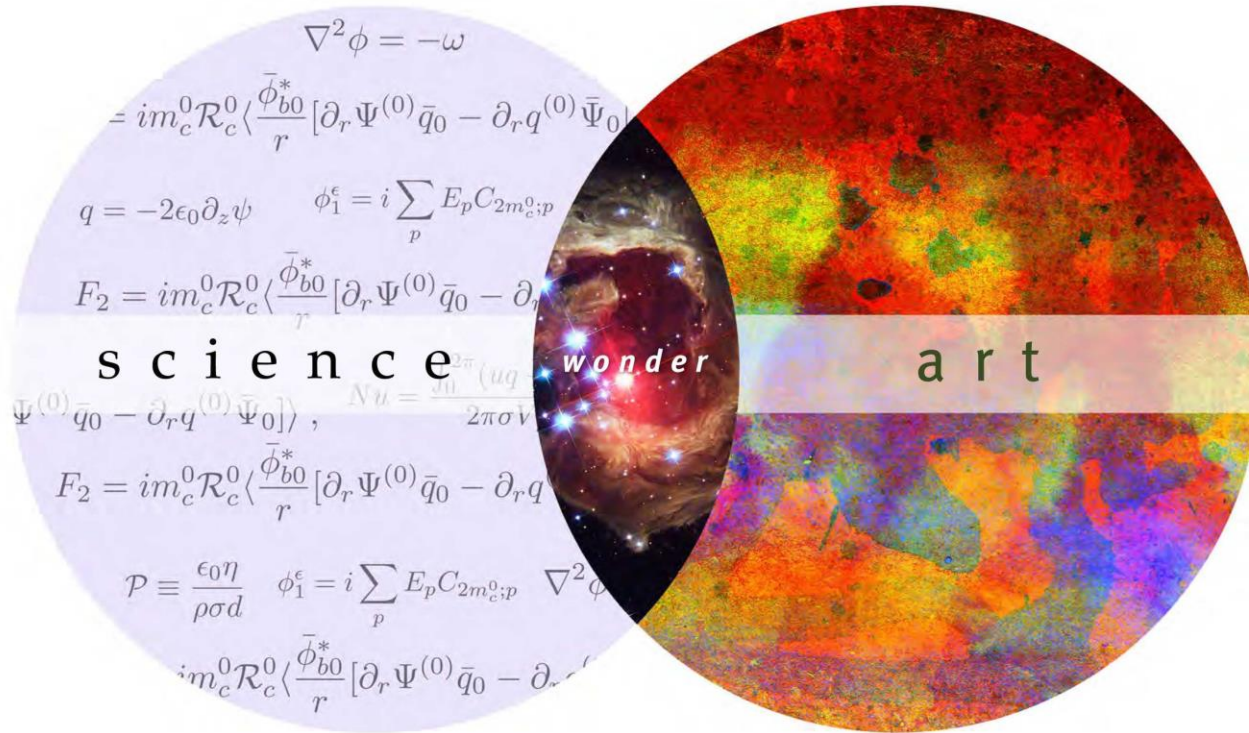
Please note that this tool is not intended to be used as a diagnosis tool for dementia. If you have any concerns, you should consult your medical practitioner to receive specific medical advice.

Dementia prevention recommendations

Risk/protective factor	Recommendations
Education: You reported your highest qualification was secondary education.	You may wish to continue to pursue further education and mentally stimulating activities as this may build your cognitive reserve.
For more information refer to => https://www.tafensw.edu.au/ => https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/	
Body Mass Index: You have reported that you are 45 years old with a height of 170 cm and a weight of 85 kg which results in a BMI of 29.41. You fall under the overweight category.	Being overweight is linked to having a higher risk of developing dementia or cognitive decline in later-life. It is recommended you maintain a healthy weight.
For more information refer to => https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines => https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/losing-weight-guide	
Cholesterol: You reported having high cholesterol levels.	Having high cholesterol is linked to an increased risk of developing dementia or cognitive decline in later life. Maintaining a healthy diet and taking medication if prescribed by your doctor is recommended to maintain healthy cholesterol levels.
For more information refer to => https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Heart-health-education/High-blood-cholesterol	
Brain injury: You reported having a prior brain injury.	Having a brain injury is linked to an increased risk of developing dementia or cognitive decline in later life. Minimising your risk of having another brain injury is recommended.
Tips to avoid head injury: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect your head by wearing a helmet or other protective gear when cycling and engaging in sporting activities. • Use a walker or other assistive device if you have mobility problems. • Check your eyesight regularly and use glasses or contact lenses as prescribed. 	
Blood pressure: You reported having hypertension.	Having hypertension is associated with a risk of poorer cognitive functioning (thinking skills) and may be linked to an increased risk of developing dementia or cognitive decline in later life. Maintaining a healthy & balanced diet, a healthy weight, regular daily exercise and taking any medications prescribed by your doctor is recommended.

Risk/protective factor	Recommendations
For more information refer to => https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/conditions/hypertension => https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/risk-factors/high-blood-pressure/contents/high-blood-pressure => https://www.who.int/health-topics/hypertension/	
Sleep: You reported having poor levels of sleep.	Healthy sleep habits may reduce your risk of developing dementia in later life. If you have sleep problems it is recommended that you discuss your sleep patterns with your GP. Most adults need about 7-8 hours of sleep per night, but some individuals are healthy with less or more.
For more information refer to => https://www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au/insomnia.html	
Depression: You reported a high number of depressive symptoms.	Experiencing depression is associated with an increased risk of developing cognitive decline or dementia in later life. It is recommended you seek support and treatment for depression. This can involve education, talking therapies, online courses, antidepressants, or a specialist referral.
For more information refer to => https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/depression => https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/clinical-resources/depression	
Fish intake: You reported eating fish less than once a week.	Eating fish may help protect brain health and might reduce the risk of developing cognitive decline or dementia in later life. Maintaining a healthy diet is recommended to all ages. Aim to eat fish at least one time a week. Check with your doctor if you have any nutritional imbalances.
For more information refer to => https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/mind-diet	
Alcohol consumption: Your reported alcohol consumption indicates that you are a heavy drinker.	Excessive consumption of alcohol may be associated with an increased risk of dementia or cognitive decline in later in life. It is recommended you limit drinking and drink within the recommended limits for health, to reduce the risk of cognitive decline and/or dementia in addition to reducing other health risks.
There is no safe limit of alcohol consumption (Department of Health). To quit or reduce your alcohol consumption, the first step is talking to your doctor who can provide advice and recommendations based on your needs. For tips to moderate drinking, see DrinkWise https://drinkwise.org.au/drinking-and-you/support-services/ For drinking guidelines, see NHMRC Australia Alcohol Guidelines https://cogdrisk.neura.edu.au/recommendations/nhmrc-drinking-guidelines	

Applying Population Data to a Unique Individual



Applying Population Data to a Unique Individual

1. Critical Thinking & Analytical Skills

- Understanding Statistical Significance
- Interpreting Data
- Causation vs. Correlation

2. Clinical Reasoning

- Individualized Assessment
- Risk Stratification
- Tailoring Interventions

3. Knowledge of Epidemiology & Statistics

- Appropriate Use of Risk Models
- Handling Confounding Variables

4. Cultural Competency & Contextual Awareness

- Understanding Social and Cultural Context
- Sensitivity to Diversity

5. Communication Skills

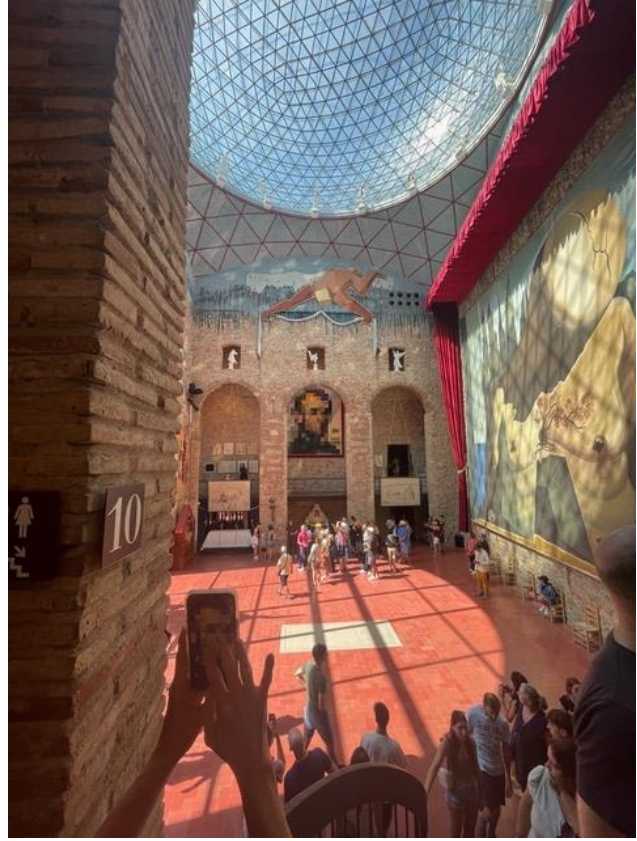
- Conveying Uncertainty
- Shared Decision Making

6. Ethical Considerations

- Balancing Population-Based Recommendations with Individual Rights
- Informed Consent

The benefit of perspective





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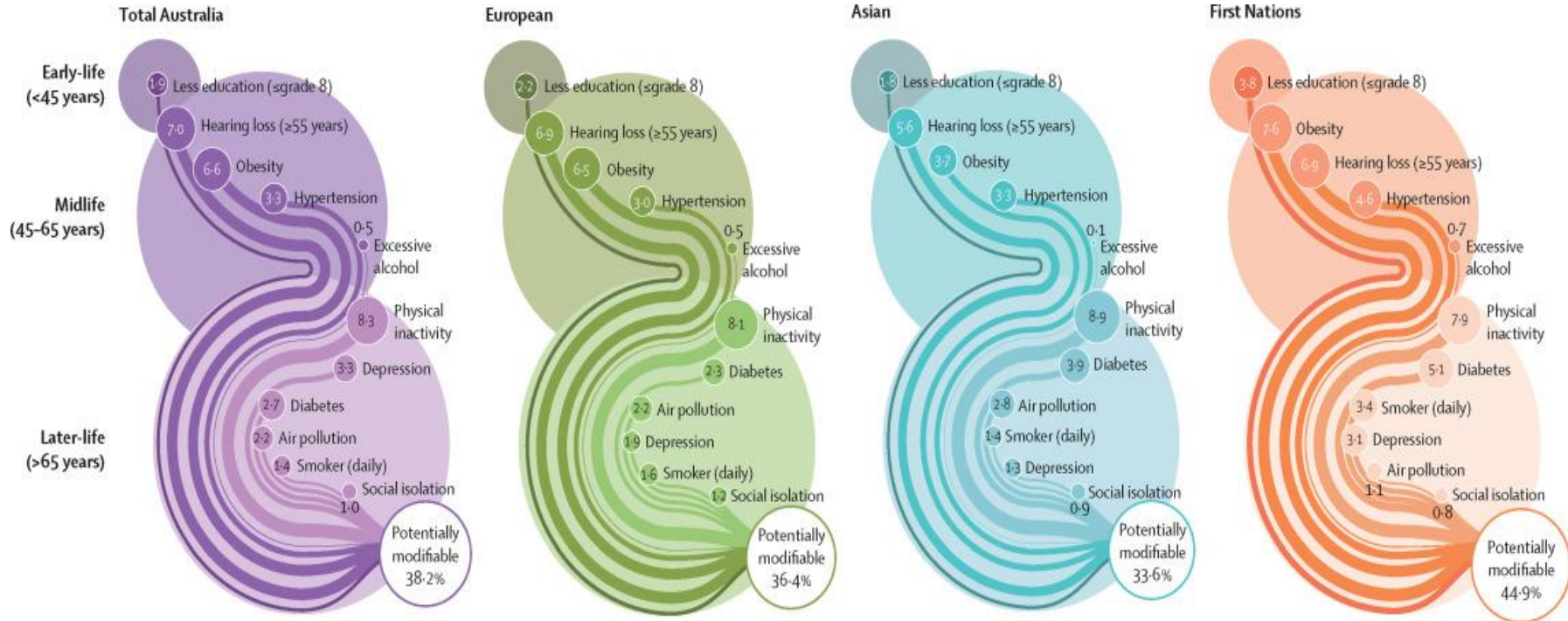


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Modifiable Risk Factors For Australian Populations



Progressing dementia risk reduction initiatives for culturally and linguistically diverse older adults in Australia

Dhvani Patel¹ | Jed Montayre²  | Diana Karamacoska³ | Joyce Siette^{1,4} 

Abstract

Objectives: Dementia is a global public health concern, with approximately 487,500 Australians living with this condition. As an incurable disease, collaborative public health approaches are at the forefront for risk reduction of dementia. In Australia, nearly one in three individuals older than 65 years belong to culturally and linguistically diverse populations (CALD), yet dementia prevention approaches within CALD communities remain limited. Current health services and education require a targeted multidimensional and multicultural approach for dementia prevention interventions.

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Dementia Training for Australia's Workforce

To find out more visit

dta.com.au

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