



What's good for **your heart** is good for **your brain**.

alzheimer's  association™

## Facts: Brain Health, Heart Health and African-Americans

Every heartbeat pumps about one-fifth of your blood to your brain. Your brain cells need the oxygen and nutrients carried by your blood so you can think clearly, speak and remember.

Conditions that damage the heart and blood vessels, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes, can also interfere with the brain's vital supply lines. We know that African-Americans have a higher risk for these conditions, which may increase their risk of developing heart disease, stroke and Alzheimer's disease.

African Americans who address their heart health may also be strengthening their cognitive health.

### African-Americans at risk

African-Americans may be at a higher risk for heart disease, stroke and Alzheimer's disease.

- By the year 2030, the number of African-Americans 65 or older is expected to more than double. Increasing age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's, with one in eight people over the age of 65 developing the disease.
- African-Americans are at higher risk\* for diabetes, a disease with a strong connection to Alzheimer's, vascular dementia and stroke.
- More than 40 percent of African-Americans have high blood pressure (HBP) and are at risk for stroke — which can lead to a greater risk for developing Alzheimer's.
- Having high cholesterol increases the risk for stroke, and may increase the risk for Alzheimer's.

- African-Americans, as a group, are at a greater risk for heart disease and stroke.
- More than 100,000 African-Americans have a stroke every year.
- African-Americans are twice as likely to have a stroke.\*
- African-Americans may have a higher rate of vascular (stroke-related) dementia.

*\*Compared to Caucasian Americans*

### Reducing the risks

African-Americans may have a higher risk for Alzheimer's disease and stroke because of factors that can't be controlled, such as age and family history. However, there are risk factors individuals can control if they take steps to keep their brains healthier as they age.

### Watch your numbers

- Blood pressure – desirable blood pressure is less than 120/80
- Blood sugar – desirable fasting blood sugar is less than 100 mg/dL
- Body weight – keep your body weight in the recommended range
- Cholesterol – desirable cholesterol is less than 200 mg/dL

### Make healthy lifestyle choices

- Stay mentally active
- Remain socially involved
- Stay physically active
- Reduce your intake of fat and cholesterol
- Don't smoke

### For more information

Contact the Alzheimer's Association at [www.alz.org/co](http://www.alz.org/co) or 1.800.272.3900.

\*Survey conducted by the American Heart Association and the Alzheimer's Association 2008

## Multicultural Education Program Series—Winter/Spring 2012

These programs are appropriate for family members, friends, long distance caregivers and community members.

**Registration is required. Unless otherwise indicated all programs are free of charge. To register go to [alz.org/co](http://alz.org/co), call 303-813-1669 or send an email to [rosalyn.reese@alz.org](mailto:rosalyn.reese@alz.org)**

### **The Basics: Memory Loss, Dementia and Alzheimer's**

*Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging. Learn the differences between Alzheimer's other dementias and normal memory loss due to aging. Learn about the Alzheimer's disease process, the programs offered by the Alzheimer's Association and the community resources available.*

### **Caregiving Tips: Successful Communication**

*The ability to communicate effectively with your loved one can make your job as a caregiver easier and increase the quality of life and safety for the person with dementia. This class covers successful communication skills for interacting with people with dementia.*

### **Know the 10 Signs: Early Detection Matters**

*Learn about typical changes as we age and changes you should be concerned about. Learn more about the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's, why early diagnosis is important, the myths versus realities of the disease, and how you can take control of decisions you need to make for the future. Presenters will also share resources and programs available at no cost from the Alzheimer's Association.*

*Please call for upcoming dates*

**Venue:**

**Aurora Center for Active Adults**

### **Buck Alzheimer's**

#### **Donate on your State Income Tax Form**

Donate \$1 buck, \$10 bucks or more on your 2011 Colorado State tax form in support of the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado and help make a difference to those living with Alzheimer's disease in our state. Check line 35

Colorado is projected to see an increase in Alzheimer's over the next few years from 72,000 people to 140,000. The demand for our education, counseling, support groups and 24-hour Helpline will increase dramatically as the number of people with Alzheimer's reaches epidemic proportions.

**Our ability to provide free programs and support to all Coloradoans who need our help depends on your generosity.**

