

[Sign Up](#)[Previous Editions](#)[Contact Us](#)

February 2024

Heart Month: Strengthening the Heart-Brain Connection

Brain health is vitally connected to heart health — what is good for your heart is good for your brain. During [American Heart Month](#), public health practitioners can use the new *10 Healthy Habits for Your Brain* from the Alzheimer's Association® to underscore healthy behaviors beneficial to the heart and brain. These heart-brain healthy habits include:

- Controlling blood pressure.
- Managing diabetes.
- Eating a healthy diet.
- Maintaining a healthy weight.

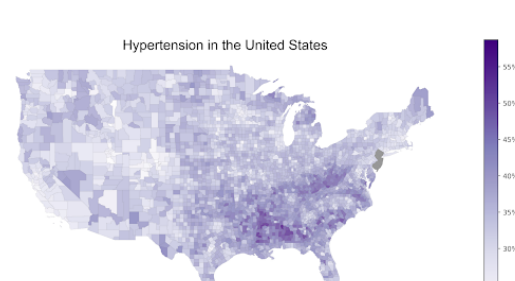
Find all 10 habits, available in both English and Spanish:

- alz.org/healthyhabits
- alz.org/habitossaludables



Addressing Vascular Risks to Protect Brain Health

Up to 80% of people with Alzheimer's also have significant vascular pathology in the brain. Public health programs can promote effective prevention and management of vascular health while also raising awareness of healthy cognitive functioning.



Learn about the evidence connecting vascular risk factors and brain health — and the implications for public health — from the Alzheimer's Association [BOLD Public Health Center of Excellence on Dementia Risk Reduction](#).

[Watch Summary of the Evidence](#)[Read Summary of the Evidence](#)

Looking to understand dementia risk factors in your community?

[Find Your State](#)

Just Released: HBI Road Map Evaluation Tool

The Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) [Road Map Evaluation Tool](#) (and accompanying [downloadable spreadsheet](#)) is designed to help state and local health departments measure, track and assess implementation of the HBI Road Map. The tool contains measures for each of the HBI Road Map's 24 actions and includes impact evaluation questions. For an introduction to the tool and to hear from the Georgia Department of Public Health and the Alzheimer's Association Georgia Chapter on the importance of evaluation and how to use the tool, watch the launch webinar.

[Watch Recording](#)

To track annual implementation and assess the nationwide impact of the HBI Road Map, state and local health departments are encouraged to share evaluation data with their [local Alzheimer's Association chapters](#). Reach out to publichealth@alz.org to connect with your local chapter.

alz.org/HBIRoadMap

Third HBI Road Map Strategist Cohort Awarded

The Alzheimer's Association and the [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO) have launched the third cohort of the HBI Road Map Strategists. This nationwide effort focuses on building public health capacity to address dementia at the local level. The Road Map Strategist program funds local health departments and tribal health organizations to better address brain health, dementia and caregiving in their communities. The awardees are:

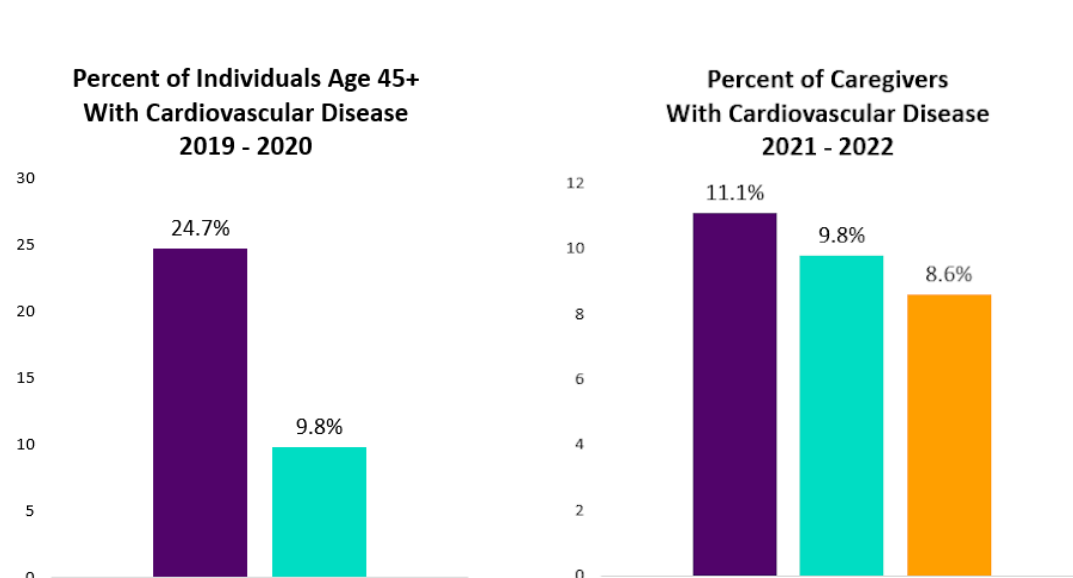
- Clay County Health Department (Illinois)
- Davis County Health Department (Utah)
- Kitsap Public Health District (Washington)
- Lamar County Health Department (Georgia)
- Nelson-Griggs District Health Unit (North Dakota)
- Northeast Tri County Health District (Washington)
- Oneida County Health Department (Wisconsin)
- Panhandle Public Health District (Nebraska)
- Pharr Department of Health (Texas)
- Waukesha County Public Health (Wisconsin)



Data Spotlight on the Heart-Brain Connection

Nationally aggregated data from the 2019-2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) [Cognitive Decline Module](#) found that individuals aged 45 and older with subjective cognitive decline (SCD) were about 2.5 times more likely to have cardiovascular disease than individuals without SCD. Such findings are consistent with existing evidence of links between heart and brain health.

In a similar analysis, nationally aggregated data from the 2021-2022 BRFSS [Caregiver Module](#) found that 11.1% of dementia caregivers had cardiovascular disease, higher than the percentages for both non-dementia caregivers and non-caregivers.



Free Medicare State and County Dementia Data Available

State and county data on the Medicare fee-for-service population is available in an easy-to-use visualization tool from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). For people diagnosed with Alzheimer's and other dementia, the data include diagnosed prevalence, costs, emergency department visits and hospitalization rates. Each can be broken down by sex, age, race/ethnicity and dual eligibility status — or any combination. The tool allows users to compare data between states and counties, and examine trends over time, with data available for each year from 2012-2022.

[View Tool](#)

Research Roundup

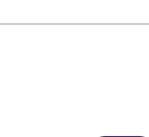
Physical Activity Can Help Cognitive Health

According to a new study published in [JAMDA](#), initiating physical activity in both mid-and late-life — as well as maintaining physical activity throughout the lifespan — lowers the chances of developing mild cognitive impairment. This research indicates the benefits of exercise on later-life cognition are not limited to particular ages.

[Learn More](#)

Healthy Lifestyles May Help Cognitive Function Even Among People with Alzheimer's Pathology

A healthy lifestyle may help maintain cognitive abilities even among people with pathologies typically associated with Alzheimer's and other dementia. A recent study published in [JAMA Neurology](#) explores the impact of a healthy lifestyle on older adults' cognition. This study found that adherence to a healthier lifestyle — defined as physical activity, diet, cognitive engagement, limited alcohol consumption and not smoking — is associated with better cognitive function at the end of life, even among those with brain changes typically associated with Alzheimer's, such as amyloid.

[Learn More](#)

Webinars and Upcoming Events

Integrating Brain Health into Health Improvement Planning — The HBI Road Map and MAPP 2.0

March 13 | 3-4 p.m. ET

Community health improvement planning is an opportunity for local health departments and their community partners to address the burden and disparities related to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. In this webinar, the NACCHO and the Alzheimer's Association will introduce participants to a new guide, *Integrating Brain Health into Community Health Improvement Planning*. This guide outlines how the [Healthy Brain Initiative \(HBI\) Road Map](#) and [Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships \(MAPP\) 2.0](#) can be used together to promote brain health and help caregivers through a community health improvement process.

[Register Today](#)

Advance Your Career and the Future of Dementia Research

The Alzheimer's Association Interdisciplinary Summer Research Institute (AA-ISRI) is an immersive, no-cost opportunity for early career researchers in public health or psychosocial care to further a career in dementia science and accelerate breakthroughs in the field. The program will take place in Chicago from August 19-23, 2024. Applications are due March 11.

[View Application](#)

Recordings and Resources

Recording Now Available: *Taking Charge of Your Brain Health*

Last month's *ALZ Talks: Taking Charge of Your Brain Health* emphasized the integration of the [10 Healthy Habits for Your Brain](#) into daily routines to potentially reduce dementia risk. Speakers shared their personal approaches to prioritizing brain health and offered practical tips for maintaining habits.

[View Recording](#)

The Healthy Brain Initiative is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$11,433,732 with 100 percent funding by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the Alzheimer's Association and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementias.

Alzheimer's Association National Office, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, IL 60601 ©2024 Alzheimer's Association. All rights reserved. 800.272.3900 | www.alz.org | publichealth@alz.org Please add publichealth@alz.org to your address book to ensure you receive all future emails. [View your email preferences or unsubscribe.](#)