



**Bournemouth  
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**ADRC**

Ageing & Dementia  
Research Centre  
Bournemouth University

# Healthy Brain, Healthy Life

Key information  
resource



**Alzheimer's  
Research  
UK**

Inspire Fund

**healthwatch**  
Dorset

**Edge Hill  
University**

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## Healthy Brain, Healthy Life

Brain health and dementia prevention using  
creative and culturally tailored approaches

@BU\_HealthyBrain

# Dementia within minority ethnic communities

## What we know

- An estimated **25,000** people from minority ethnic background live with dementia in the UK.
- This is expected to double to **50,000** by 2026, and rise to over **172,000** by 2051, nearly a 600% increase in just 40 years.
- Early onset dementia is very common in individuals from minority ethnic communities and they are also at greater risk of developing vascular dementia.
- People from minority ethnic communities were less likely to receive a cognitive assessment, scored low on the tests and were more likely to be seen by a psychiatrist.
- There are very few dementia diagnosis and support services that are culturally appropriate and take into account cultural norms of minority ethnic communities.

# Dementia within minority ethnic communities

## What we can do

- We need to use more ways that are culturally appropriate to create awareness, promote understanding and create dialogue around brain health and dementia.
- We need to encourage individuals from minority ethnic communities to get involved in research around dementia. This will help policies and services to be tailored to their needs.
- There is stigma surrounding dementia diagnosis. Many people are worried about getting negative perceptions from professionals.
- It is important that professionals are trained to be able to support individuals from minority ethnic communities.

# Risk factors for minority ethnic communities

## Risk factors

Dementia is not a natural part of ageing. It is a set of symptoms that develop when the brain is damaged by disease.

A person's 'risk' of developing dementia is the chance that they will get it at some point in their life.

Risk factors that we **cannot** change:

- Age, gender and sex, ethnicity, genes.

Risk factors that we **can** change:

- Excessive alcohol consumption, high blood pressure, smoking, low physical activity, low social contact, air pollution, depression, obesity, diabetes.

Many people are not aware of the link between these health-related behaviours and dementia.

# Risk factors for minority ethnic communities

Risk factors

Ways to reduce our risk:



Physical activity



Eat a healthy balanced diet



Don't smoke



Drink less alcohol



Keep socially active



Keep your brain active



Have regular health checks with your GP

# Our traditional food and our community

Fun facts

## Healthy eating for brain health

The food that we eat impacts our brain health. Nutritious meals which are well-balanced contribute to better brain health.

- Food that is good for the heart is also good for the brain.
- Therefore, a heart healthy diet is a brain healthy diet.
- Common conditions influenced by diet such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes harm both cardiovascular and cognitive health.
- No single food acts as a silver bullet for improving or maintaining brain health.
- The combination of different types of food and nutrients together in our diets likely determines health benefits.

# Our traditional food and our community

Fun facts

## What foods are good for our brain health?

Nutrient	Food sources
Omega-3 fatty acids	Fatty fish, flax seeds, krill, chia, kiwi fruit, butternuts, walnuts
Curcumin	Turmeric (curry spice)
Flavonoids	Cocoa, green tea, ginkgo tree, citrus fruits, wine (higher in red wine), dark chocolate, berries
B vitamins	Various natural sources, dairy products, fortified cereals, fermented foods
Vitamin D	Fish liver, fatty fish, mushrooms, fortified products, milk, soy milk, cereal grains
Vitamin E	Asparagus, avocado, nuts, peanuts, olives, red palm oil, seeds, spinach, vegetable oils, wheatgerm, olive oil
Choline	Egg yolks, soy, beef, chicken, veal, liver, lettuce
Combination of vitamins (C, E, A)	Vitamin C: citrus fruits, green leafy vegetables: spinach dandelion, coloured vegetables: sweet potato, calf and beef liver
Calcium, zinc, selenium	Milk, fish, oysters, beans, nuts, almonds, whole grains, sunflower seeds, cereals
Copper	Oysters, beef/lamb liver, brazil nuts, blackstrap molasses, cocoa, black pepper
Iron	Red meat, fish, poultry

\*Check out the African & Caribbean and South Asian Eatwell Guide of how much to eat from each food group.

### Storytelling around the fire

Poetry, drama and storytelling contribute to improved quality of life and wellbeing by stimulating an enjoyable experience.

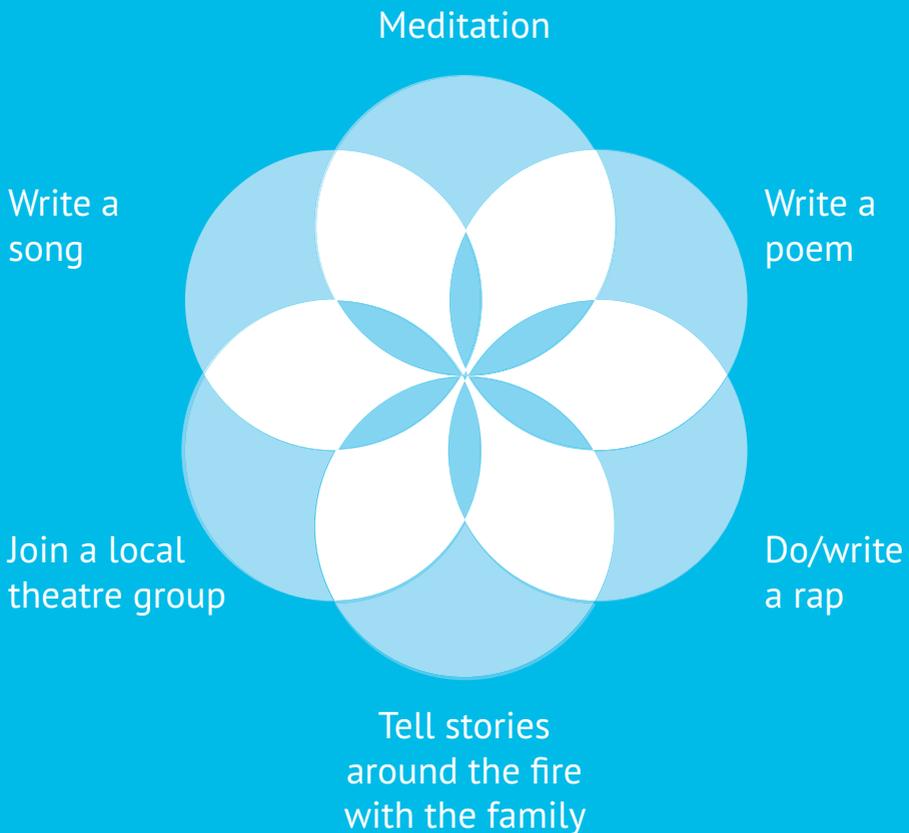
#### What are some of the benefits for brain health?

- Provide good creative outlets.
- Help us to explore and reflect on feelings.
- Build self-awareness and self-confidence.
- Stimulate areas of the brain linked to memory.

# Our culture and brain health

## Activites

What kind of activities can I do?



# Our culture and brain health

## Activities

### Music, movement and mind – keeping active

#### What are some of the benefits for brain health?

- Music and dance are not only good for our brain health but can also reduce the onset of dementia.
- If you combine music with an aerobic and social activity, you can receive the maximum health benefit from it.
- Music stimulates the brain's reward centres while dance activates its sensory and motor circuits.

#### How does music and dance help our brain health?

- Encourages socialisation.
- Strengthens brain function.
- Improves cardiovascular health, mood, confidence, self-esteem, balance and strength.

# Our culture and brain health

## Activities

### Music, movement and mind – keeping active

What kind of dances can I do?

Zumba, Kizomba, Bharatnatyam, Kathak and Salsa.



What can I do to keep active?



# Our culture and brain health

## Activities

### Creating with our hands - expression through art

Creative art enhances our brain function and it is important for improved attentional, creativity, sensory, cognitive, emotional balance and fine motor skills.

#### What are some of the benefits for brain health?

- Reduction in stress and cortisol levels.
- Helps to process our emotions and imagine a more hopeful future.
- It activates the reward centre of our brain and allows you to focus deeply.

#### What types of art can I do?

- Drawing, painting, collaging, sculpting clay, cake decorating, knitting, scrapbooking, pottery, woodwork, paper craft, stitching, crocheting.

## Stimulating the brain – keeping our brain active and young

### How do we keep our brains active and healthy?

- Exercising our cognitive skills by playing brain games is a fun and effective way to boost our memory.
- Keeping our mind active involves practicing memory exercises that build our ‘mental muscles’.
- Brain games and memory exercises improve retention and recollection in our everyday life.
- Regularly playing brain games and memory games can help reduce our risk of developing dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.
- Games can spark imagination and increase both our creativity and productivity.
- Brain games improve our short-term memory, working memory, concentration and problem-solving skills.

# Our culture and brain health

## Activities

### Stimulating the brain – keeping our brain active and young

What activities can I do?

#### Board games

Improve creative abilities, logical thinking to increase brain function.



#### Chess, Checkers, Backgammon, Oware

Encourage our brain to create responsive patterns for strategic moves that lead to victory and ultimately foster memory growth.



#### Lumosity

Improves cognitive abilities by simulating different areas of the brain, including parts responsible for problem solving, memory and attention span.



#### Puzzles

Increase active brain cells and promote a healthy mind.



# Further information and resources

Alzheimer's Research UK provides a lot of resources around brain health and dementia prevention:

[www.alzheimersresearchuk.org](http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org)

Dementia UK provides support for families around dementia diagnosis and services:

[www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)

The Race Equality Foundation has resources on dementia and black and minority ethnic communities:

[raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/health-care/dementia-and-black-and-minority-ethnic-communities-resources](http://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/health-care/dementia-and-black-and-minority-ethnic-communities-resources)

Dementia Action Alliance have information on dementia and brain health for black and minority ethnic groups:

[www.dementiaaction.org.uk/joint\\_work/dementia\\_and\\_seldom\\_heard\\_groups/black\\_asian\\_minority\\_ethnics\\_bame](http://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/joint_work/dementia_and_seldom_heard_groups/black_asian_minority_ethnics_bame)

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