

B Vitamins Dramatically Lower Risk of Alzheimer's Disease

By [John Phillip](#) on 09/07/2011

Alzheimer's disease cases are growing at an unprecedented rate with new cases expected to double by the year 2030. A news release from Alzheimer's Disease International considers this the single most significant health and social crisis of the 21st century. There is much confusion about the factors that lead to [Alzheimer's](#) and what can be done to prevent and reduce the risk of developing this insidious affliction.

Natural health practitioners understand that poor diet is a large contributor to this preventable disease. In addition to diet, new research is beginning to shine a light on a super nutrient that could hold the key to prevention.

High Homocysteine Doubles Risk of Alzheimer's Disease

Homocysteine is a naturally occurring amino acid commonly seen in excess due to a diet high in meat and protein sources. Research [published](#) in the *New England Journal of Medicine*¹ demonstrated that **elevated homocysteine levels double the risk for Alzheimer's disease.** Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) and B12 are known to **dramatically lower levels of homocysteine in the blood and lower risk of disease.**

Vitamin B12 Deficiency Linked with Alzheimer's Disease

Evidence is mounting to suggest that a vitamin B12 deficiency may be connected to increased risk for developing Alzheimer's disease. The results of a [study](#) released in the journal *Neurology* studied the level of homocysteine and vitamin B12 in elderly subjects. They found that for every single unit increase in the blood level of homocysteine, the risk of Alzheimer's disease jumped by 16%. Similarly, risk decreased by 2% for each unit increase in blood concentration of Vitamin B12. Vitamin B12 is known to become dangerously low with age, and represents a significant factor in the development of Alzheimer's disease.

Brain Shrinkage Cut by Half with B Vitamins

The normal shrinking of the brain with age is considered normal by

¹ NEJM 2/14/2002

modern medicine, but scientists have been able to show that shrinkage can be halted and reduced with high doses of B vitamins. Researchers at Oxford University supplemented test participants with full spectrum B vitamins for a period of 2 years and found that they were able to reduce brain shrinkage in half as compared to a group receiving a placebo. The study authors conclude, *"It is our hope that this simple and safe treatment will delay development of Alzheimer's in many people who suffer from mild memory problems."*

Protect Yourself by Reducing Meat and Supplementing B Vitamins

More than enough evidence is mounting to show that poor diet and lack of B vitamins represent independent risk factors for developing Alzheimer's disease. You can lower your risk of developing this disease by eating a diet low in animal protein to restrict production of homocysteine. Cut sugar and processed carbs in favor of a diet packed with fresh vegetables and natural nuts, seeds and Omega-3 fats. Take a high potency organic whole food based B vitamin supplement daily, and be sure to have your homocysteine blood levels checked regularly.

Research is confirming that diet is the single most important risk factor that leads to Alzheimer's disease. Many studies are beginning to show that B vitamins are critical to brain health and can prevent dementia in the aging population. While the entire family of B vitamins protects the brain, most studies concentrate on B6 and B12 taken in quantities that are 300 to 500% higher than the RDA values. Lower your risks of Alzheimer's by modifying your diet and supplement accordingly to slash risk factors that can extend your life.

References:

"Plasma Homocysteine as a Risk Factor for Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease," N Engl J Med 2002; 346:476-483

"Homocysteine and holotranscobalamin and the risk of Alzheimer disease," Neurology October 19, 2010 vol. 75 no. 16 1408-1414

"B vitamins found to halve brain shrinkage in old," Reuters, Kate Kelland, London, | Wed Sep 8, 2010