

Survey shows lack of brain health awareness among women

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 Cleveland Clinic

WOMEN'S
ALZHEIMER'S
MOVEMENT 

Nearly **2/3** of Americans with Alzheimer's disease are women, but **82%** of women are unaware that they are at greater risk of developing the disease.

Credit: Cleveland Clinic

Nearly two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's disease are women, but according to a Women's Alzheimer's Movement at Cleveland Clinic survey, 82% of women aren't even aware that they're at greater risk for developing the disease.

"I was surprised by how many [women](#) didn't know they were at risk for

Alzheimer's disease to a greater extent than men. But at the same time, I'm not surprised that a lot of folks aren't kind of talking about that with their medical provider," Jessica Caldwell, Ph.D., Director of the Women's Alzheimer's Movement Prevention Center at Cleveland Clinic.

Alzheimer's disease can severely affect a person's memory, thinking, learning and organizing skills, and eventually affects their ability to carry out simple daily activities.

Dr. Caldwell said there are many factors that can put a woman at risk.

"Some of those things might relate to genetics. Menopause might play a role for women and men don't go through that extreme loss of hormones at mid-life, and there's also a lifestyle piece to this," she said. "Women exercise less than men do for example, and not being physically active is also a risk for Alzheimer's."

The survey also found that 73% of women have not talked to their doctors about brain health, and 30% said they're not worried about getting Alzheimer's.

However, the good news is women are highly motivated to make [lifestyle changes](#) to reduce their risk.

"That is very consistent with what I see in my prevention clinic. When women know that there's a risk in their family for a very devastating disease like Alzheimer's, they are ready to work on whatever they can to avoid it or to hold it off until they're older. Women are really great in terms of making a commitment and sticking to it," said Dr. Caldwell.

She said it's never too early for a woman to start taking [preventative measures](#) and encourages them to consult with their physician should they have any concerns.

Provided by Cleveland Clinic

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