



## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 6, 2009

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### **Alzheimer's Foundation of America Lays Out Strategies for Healthy Aging *New Web Site Focuses on Being Proactive, Reducing Risks for Dementia***

NEW YORK, NY—Look at your calendar from the past week: Have you gone for a brisk walk, eaten dark leafy vegetables or toured a museum with a friend?

With growing evidence that these are the types of lifestyle choices that can pay off now and in the future, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) has introduced a new interactive Web site—[www.alzprevention.org](http://www.alzprevention.org)—that focuses on being proactive about your mental and physical health. It highlights strategies that help promote healthy aging and may reduce the risk for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

The site also includes tips, research updates, a survey, a bulletin board and guest columns, as well as information about dementia and the importance of early diagnosis of memory problems.

"It's critical to embrace a heart-healthy and brain-healthy regimen at any age," said Eric J. Hall, AFA's president and CEO. "Care begins with taking care of the whole person."

The Web site is the centerpiece of AFA's new initiative about the "power of being proactive," which also includes the establishment of a Prevention Advisory Board composed of leading experts; the release of a special edition of care *ADvantage*, AFA's quarterly magazine for caregivers; and ongoing distribution of successful aging literature during memory screening events in communities nationwide.

AFA unveiled the Web site as the nation celebrates Older Americans Month in May and as the rising incidence of Alzheimer's disease increasingly poses a public health threat. The number of people with the brain disorder, which results in memory loss and other intellectual decline, doubles every five years beyond age 65. While advancing age and genetics are the greatest known risk factors, evolving research emphasizes that some other factors may be controllable.

According to Richard E. Powers, M.D., chairman of AFA's Medical Advisory Board, "We know that if you have clinical conditions like poorly controlled hypertension, diabetes and obesity, your risk for developing memory loss goes up. That's why you have to make good lifestyle decisions and act on the risk factors you can change."

Penning the site's first "Prevention Pundit" column is Paul D. Nussbaum, Ph.D., chairman of AFA's Prevention Advisory Board and author of "Your Brain Health Lifestyle." In his column, Nussbaum urges a comprehensive approach for overall brain health that includes multiple lifestyle behaviors: physical activity, mental stimulation, nutrition, socialization and spirituality.

"It is time for our society to recognize the miracle of the human brain and to apply what we know about brain health to all aspects of daily life. Most importantly, individuals must take steps that will generate brain reserve and do their best to protect their own life story from being robbed by

devastating diseases such as Alzheimer's disease," said Nussbaum, an adjunct associate professor in neurological surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

For Jane Angelich of Novato, CA living a healthy lifestyle is paramount. Having watched her mother decline from Alzheimer's disease and her father struggle as a caregiver for about 10 years, Angelich, 57, said her biggest health concern is Alzheimer's disease.

As a result, her lifestyle rules include an annual checkup, no smoking or drinking, eating a balanced diet, constantly reading "to keep myself sharp," and keeping abreast of the latest research.

Although Angelich realizes she "can't control her future entirely," she said, "I just don't want my husband to have to go through what my dad went through."

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America is a national nonprofit organization headquartered in New York and made up of 950 member organizations that provide hands-on programs to meet the educational, emotional, practical and social needs of families affected by Alzheimer's disease and related illnesses. AFA's services include a toll-free hot line, counseling, educational materials, a free caregiver magazine and professional training. For information, call (toll-free) 866-AFA-8484 or visit [www.alzfdn.org](http://www.alzfdn.org).

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