



## WISHING YOU WELL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

As the year ends and we embrace the cozy, colder months, many of us are reflecting and enjoying moments indoors. In this newsletter, we're excited to share some encouraging advances in Alzheimer's disease research, along with practical tips to support healthy aging. You'll see this year's highlights from promising research and learn about new technologies that help older adults prevent falls. We also include guidance for caregivers during the holiday season, plus some delicious brain-healthy recipes.

On behalf of all of us at the NC Registry for Brain Health, we value your partnership and involvement in our research. Wishing you a joyful, healthy, and restorative holiday season!

**Learn more about brain health research at our website,**  
[ncbrainhealth.org](https://ncbrainhealth.org).

## FROM EARLY DETECTION TO PREVENTION – 2025 IN REVIEW

Researchers are making significant progress in understanding, detecting, and potentially preventing dementia. A recent study indicates that over 40% of adults over 55 may develop dementia during their lifetime, but advancements in science are moving quickly. This year, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the first simple blood test capable of detecting key Alzheimer’s proteins in people with cognitive impairment with over 90% accuracy. This makes early diagnosis more accessible. Through many large-scale studies, we also learned that lifestyle changes can improve thinking skills and reduce dementia risk, even for those with genetic predispositions. These changes can include healthy eating, regular exercise, and cognitive training. This year, scientists also discovered new clues about the impact of inflammation, vaccines, and very small amounts of lithium in protecting brain health. These breakthroughs were made possible by participants like you who said yes to being involved in clinical studies. Thank you!

To read the full article, visit [this link](#).



## GET YOUR STEPS IN AND PREVENT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE



Despite the colder temperatures ahead, it's important to get your daily steps in year-round, even if that means walking around a shopping mall. A long-term observational study suggests that moderate physical activity, specifically walking, may slow the build-up of tau tangles in the brain, a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease. Individuals who averaged 5,000 to 7,500 steps each day showed slower progression of tau accumulation, especially among those who already had elevated amyloid levels. These results, published in [Nature Medicine](#), point toward exercise as a potentially powerful, non-pharmacological strategy to delay cognitive decline. To learn more, visit [this link](#).

## TECHNOLOGY TO PREVENT FALLS

Falls remain the leading cause of injuries among adults over 65. In North Carolina, nearly three in ten (28.9%) older adults experience a fall each year. These events can lead to broken bones, hospital visits, and a loss of confidence that limits participation in physical activities that support brain health.

Age-related changes, like balance issues, weaker muscles, slower reaction times, or chronic health conditions, can increase fall risk. The good news is that new technologies are making it easier than ever to stay active and safe. Smartwatches that detect sudden movements, AI-powered home sensors, automatic lighting, supportive footwear, and upgraded walking aids all offer ways to reduce risk and increase confidence at home and on the go.

To explore some of these helpful tools, visit [this link](#).

Are you curious about your own fall risk? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers a free, quick questionnaire at [this link](#).



## CAREGIVING DURING THE HOLIDAYS: SUPPORTIVE TIPS FOR BUSY CAREGIVERS



The holiday season can be especially stressful for caregivers, and AARP offers simple, practical tips to make things easier. Prioritizing the traditions that matter most, asking loved ones for specific help, and taking short breaks can help restore energy and reduce feelings of being overwhelmed. Keeping plans flexible and mindful of your loved one's needs—such as quieter activities or shorter visits—can make celebrations more meaningful and manageable.

To read more, visit [this link](#).

For healthy holiday recipe ideas from the American Heart Association, visit [this link](#).

## ASK THE EXPERT

Do you have questions about brain health? You can submit your questions to the NC Registry for Brain Health Ask the Expert column via email to [ncbrainhealth@duke.edu](mailto:ncbrainhealth@duke.edu).



## FIND US ON FACEBOOK!



Follow the NC Registry for Brain Health on Facebook for more brain health tips and resources. Find the page by visiting [facebook.com/ncbrainhealth](https://facebook.com/ncbrainhealth).



NC Registry for Brain Health

**[Lunch N' Learn: The Empowered Caregiver](#)**

**Tuesday, December 16, 2025 | 12:00–1:30 PM | In-person**  
**AmeriHealth Caritas NC, Asheville Wellness Center**  
**216 Asheland Ave, Asheville, NC 28801**

Join a special free lunch n' learn session for caregivers. It will cover how dementia impacts communication and provide useful tips for engaging with family, friends, and healthcare providers. Resources from the Alzheimer's Association will be shared to assist caregivers along their journey.

Register at [this link](#).

**[Alzheimer's Association's 2026 North Carolina State Policy Update](#)**

**Tuesday, January 6, 2025 | 5:30PM | Virtual**

Join the Alzheimer's Association to learn about their 2026 Alzheimer's state policy priorities. With more than 210,500 North Carolinians living with Alzheimer's and more than 381,000 dementia caregivers, the Alzheimer's Association is committed to working with legislators, state agencies, community partners, and advocates to ensure North Carolina enhances support. They will discuss their 2026 state policy agenda, share important information about how you can use your voice to advocate for these priorities, and answer any questions you may have.

RSVP at [this link](#).

