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New findings reported at AAIC 2020 make an even stronger case for the potential of behavioral interventions throughout life to reduce risk of Alzheimer's and other dementias.

Highlights from the Alzheimer's Association International Conference® (AAIC®) 2020

More than 33,000 registered attendees from over 160 countries joined together virtually July 27-31 for the Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC) — the world's largest and most influential international meeting dedicated to advancing dementia science. In this exciting time in Alzheimer's and other dementia research, scientists continue the momentum necessary to advance new discoveries, even in the face of a global pandemic. What follows are five of the many key takeaways from this year's conference. Thank you for your support!

New research suggests flu and pneumonia vaccination — especially multiple vaccinations over time — may be associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer's dementia later in life. It is too early to tell if getting vaccinated for flu or pneumonia on its own impacts the risk of Alzheimer's. It's possible that people who are getting vaccinated also take care of their health in other ways, and these things add up to lower risk of Alzheimer's and other dementias. The more we understand about what reduces the risk of developing Alzheimer's, the closer we get to our goal of effective treatment, prevention and, ultimately, a cure.

Scientists continue to make advances in blood tests to detect Alzheimer's. A simple and accessible test for blood biomarkers may allow for a greater understanding of Alzheimer's in diverse populations, potentially identifying the right people for specific clinical trials. It would also allow researchers to better track the potential therapies being tested, which could help support new drug developments and more treatment options. Research reported at AAIC 2020 focuses on a protein known as tau — specifically, a form of tau known as p-tau217. Levels of this type of tau in blood may be the most accurate and specific-to-Alzheimer's way to show measurable changes to the brain, as well as one of the earliest. These new reports are very encouraging, although they need to be verified in larger and more diverse populations.

More evidence is emerging that there are factors across the entire life-span that may contribute to a person's risk for Alzheimer's and other dementia over time. New research suggests some risk factors may be present and measurable early in life, as early as our teens and 20s. In a study group including more than 700 African Americans, researchers found that having diabetes, high blood pressure or two or more heart

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health risk factors in adolescence or young adulthood was associated with significantly worse late-life cognition. This is incredibly important, as African Americans typically have a higher risk of heart health risk factors compared to other racial/ethnic groups. The research suggests that efforts to promote behaviors that benefit heart health — and maybe cognition — should also include younger people who may be especially susceptible to the impact of poor vascular health on the brain. Researchers also say that higher body mass index (BMI) in early adulthood was associated with higher late-life dementia risk, and another study looked at the influence of the quality of education on late-life cognition.

The Study of Latinos-Investigation of Neurocognitive Aging (SOL-INCA), a large and innovative study of major Latin American groups, is aiming to better understand why Hispanics are about 1.5 times more likely to develop dementia than non-Hispanic whites. Results from SOL-INCA suggest that **modifying some known risk factors (such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease) in Latin American populations may promote successful cognitive aging and reduce the risk of cognitive impairment.** Researchers also reported that APOEε4, the gene with the strongest impact on Alzheimer's risk for white, European-descended populations, appears to have a significantly weaker effect in some Latin American populations. More research is needed to provide actionable ways to reduce risk for Alzheimer's and other dementia, especially in Latin Americans who are disproportionately affected.

Announced at AAIC 2020, **the Alzheimer's Association will be conducting a new research study to globally track and understand the long-term impact of exposure to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) on the brain,** including cognition, behavior and function. Scientists from more than 30 countries are looking to participate in this study, and the World Health Organization (WHO) will provide technical assistance as we move this important collaboration forward. We will align with existing studies — such as the Framingham Heart Study — and clinicians from around the world in order to determine how the data is collected and measured.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to create unanticipated challenges for people living with Alzheimer's and all dementia, their families and caregivers. Long-term care settings are experiencing these challenges in particular. The Alzheimer's Association urges state and federal policymakers to implement policy solutions that address the immediate and long-term issues impacting care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.