

Alzheimer's & Neurodegeneration: Africa's Rising Challenge

As life expectancy rises across Africa, dementia and neurodegenerative disease are becoming a defining public health challenge.

The biology of brain aging

Neurodegenerative diseases involve progressive loss of neurons, driven by misfolded proteins, inflammation and vascular factors. They are not a normal part of aging — but risk rises sharply with age.

The African outlook

Africa's older population is growing rapidly. Without preparation, dementia cases on the continent are projected to multiply several-fold by 2050. Early awareness, diagnosis and caregiver support are critical.

What helps

Cardiovascular health, education, social engagement, sleep and physical activity all reduce risk. These are achievable, low-cost interventions accessible across most communities.

Key takeaways

- Dementia is not normal aging — it is brain disease
- Africa's dementia burden is rising rapidly
- Lifestyle factors meaningfully reduce risk
- Caregiver support is as important as clinical care

Africa focus

Building dementia-literate communities and trained caregivers is urgent groundwork for Africa's coming demographic shift.