

Can Lifestyle Changes Reverse Alzheimer's Disease?

The UCSD ADRC clinical trials team, led by Dr. Douglas Galasko is partnering with Dean Ornish, M.D., on the first randomized controlled trial to determine if the progression of early-stage Alzheimer's disease may be stopped or perhaps even reversed by a comprehensive lifestyle medicine program, without drugs, devices, or surgery. UCSD is proud to be one of the sites partnering with Dr. Ornish, the Founder & President of the non-profit Preventive Medicine Research Institute and Clinical Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine.



This lifestyle medicine program includes a whole foods low-fat, low-sugar plant-based diet; moderate exercise; stress management techniques including meditation; and psychosocial support.

In this study, 100 patients who have early to moderate Alzheimer's disease will be enrolled and randomly assigned to one of two groups that will start the lifestyle interventions at different times. Both groups will be tested at baseline using state-of-the-art measures, including cognitive testing and biomarkers.

All meals will be provided for participants and their spouse or caregiver (21 meals/week) during the study along with classes in stress management, exercise, and support groups three days/week.

There will be no costs to participants for the food, training, or testing. The study is 40 weeks in duration.

For the past 40 years Dr. Ornish and his colleagues have conducted scientific research, including randomized control trials and demonstration projects, proving that comprehensive lifestyle changes may reverse the progression of many chronic diseases. These include coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, early-stage prostate cancer, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels, and obesity.

They are now studying if these same comprehensive lifestyle changes may also stop or reverse the progression of early-stage Alzheimer's disease.

To qualify for this study, potential participants need to have:

- A diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease
- Permission from their doctor to participate
- Willingness to make these lifestyle changes
- A live-in study partner
- Ability to exercise moderately (walking)

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please email the UCSD clinical trials team at ClinicalTrialsADRC@ucsd.edu or call (858) 246-5207. Thank you for your interest.