Brain health is built through a lifetime. Lifestyle measures are actionable on a daily basis and have the potential to prevent dementia.

Dementia is not a normal part of getting older and results from brain cell loss. More than 20% of people aged 85+ in Switzerland suffer from dementia \(^1\) but this prevalence can be reduced through targeted interventions.

BrainFit4Life
Seeking a brighter future for you and your family

Dementia is the second largest cause of death in Switzerland. Relative to other diseases, disease-adjusted life years due to dementia have shown a significant increase over the last 20 years \(^3\).

Current number of cases in Switzerland: > 150,000 \(^1\)

Current number of cases world-wide: 50 million \(^2\)

Dementia is a disease that primarily affects older people. A growing and aging population means a higher number of people being affected by dementia.

While a National Plan for Dementia 2014-19, strongly supported by the Alzheimer Association Switzerland, has improved patient care, it is estimated that 50% of dementia cases are undiagnosed \(^1\), due to:

- STIGMA
- LACK OF AWARENESS
- DENIAL

Dementia costs more than 1% of the world GDP \(^5\). The WHO asked member countries to invest in dementia research proportionally to the size of problem.

This is is the status quo, showing % investment in dementia research relative to GDP \(^6\).
Currently, there is no treatment against dementia

However, lifestyle interventions benefit brain aging.

Success in slowing dementia progression has been seen in the worldwide FINGERS multidomain intervention programme, now extended to several countries.

Early diagnostics and lifestyle changes can delay the onset of age-related cognitive deficit by 5 years, halving its prevalence. Thus, Alzheimer’s associations and the WHO set dementia prevention as a priority.

However, unlike many other European countries, Switzerland lacks a Dementia Prevention Research Plan.

The Task Force BrainFit4Life urges the Swiss confederation to endorse the creation of a Strategic Research Plan for Brain Aging, with the aim of creating...

1. A national brain aging registry based on the principles of data federation
2. The design of a tailored brain health program
3. A focus towards early memory diagnostics to identify people at risk
4. A public awareness campaign to reduce stigma surrounding dementia

A Research Plan for Brain Aging is actionable today. It will lead to immediate and future benefits for all citizens and long-term savings of ~ 250 million CHF/year.

As a leader in science & innovation, Switzerland should embrace Brain Health!

References
6. WHO Global Dementia Observatory Country Profile, Switzerland, 2017

The organizing committee
Dr. Lavinia Alberi Auber; lavinia.alberiauber@sichh.ch
Prof. Jean-Marie Annoni; jean-marie.annoni@unifr.ch
Prof. Bogdan Draganski; Bogdan.Draganski@chuv.ch
Dr. Rebecca Limenitakis-Stanway; rebecca.limenitakis@sichh.ch
Dr. Irene B. Meier; irene@altoida.com