

HEARING LOSS AND THE BRAIN: UPDATED RESEARCH 2021

by Dr. Carrie Scarff, Audiology Innovations

- In **2017**, due to the worldwide growing aging population, the Lancet reported their Dementia Commission findings on risk factors and rehabilitation options related to Dementia.

Dementia Risk factors were found to include:

Obesity, Social isolation, Physical inactivity, Depression, Diabetes, Lack of education, Smoking, High blood pressure AND Hearing loss

Of note, hearing loss was identified as the **highest modifiable risk factor for Dementia**.

- In an August **2020** update to the Lancet's Dementia Commission report, additional risk factors were added to the list including:
 - Head injuries/Excessive alcohol consumption/Air pollution

Hearing loss was **again** highlighted as the **highest modifiable risk factor for Dementia**.

Reducing hearing loss was reported to reduce the likelihood of Dementia by 8%, the highest of the modifiable risk factors.

- The Lancet Commission findings support the importance of addressing hearing loss early to help mitigate Dementia.

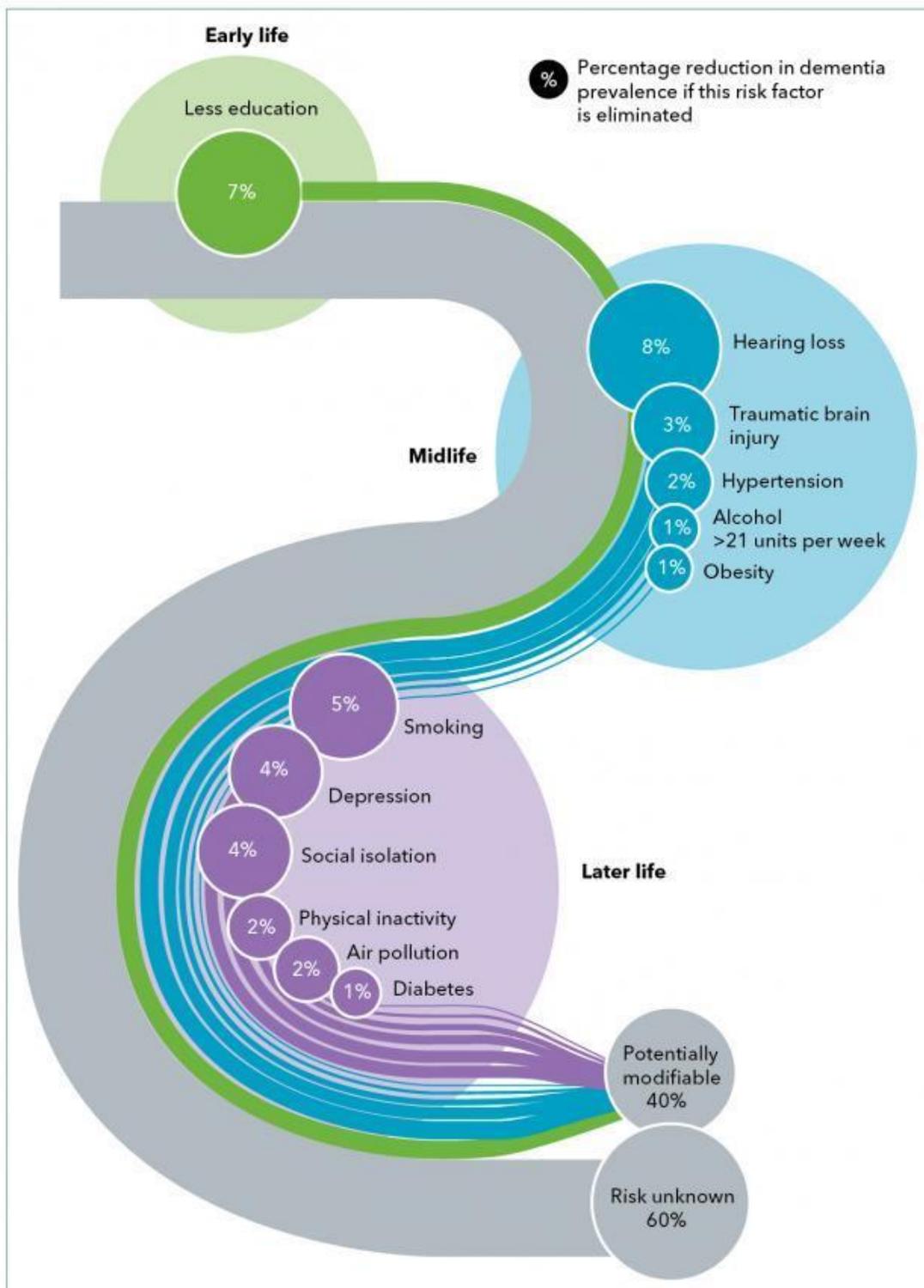
Prospective studies designed to evaluate the protective function of wearing hearing aids on brain function confirmed that although hearing loss leads to an increase in cognitive deterioration and memory changes over time, those who used hearing aids were *significantly protected from these changes*.

These are the first studies to provide concrete evidence that hearing aid use preserves cognitive function and memory.

This information may be good evidence to consider ensuring that you and your loved ones are doing everything you can to address hearing and brain health.

Visit our website at www.audiologyinnovations.ca for a link to the full Dementia commission publication

These findings were based upon International longitudinal research including the English longitudinal study, research from the University of Bordeaux, and Universities in the US, and published in The Journal of American Geriatric Society and The Journal of the American Medical Association Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery in 2018 and 2019



Population attributable fraction of potentially modifiable risk factors for dementia

