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Simple **test** could predict **Alzheimer's** 'two years before symptoms show';   
850,000 people have **dementia** in the UK  
  
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A simple memory **test** could be used to diagnose **Alzheimer's** disease two years before symptoms start to show, according to a new study.

By helping to catch the disease earlythe **test** would enabledoctors treat **Alzheimer's** and delay its debilitating effects, scientists at the University of Cambridge believe.

In the UK over 850,000 have **dementia** - the umbrella term for cognitive disorders which**Alzheimer's** falls under.

The research conducted by scientists at Cambridge University comes after the **Alzheimer's** Society predicted that 1million people will have **dementia** by 2025.

The new "Four Mountains" **test,** which early data shows is 93 per cent accurate, assesses a person's spatial memory,

The Times

reported.

It involves showing a patient an image of a mountain landscape. The patient is then shown the image alongside three other landscapes,including one which is the original but from a different angle.

Whether a patient can successfully identify the correct picture canindicate whether they may develop**Alzheimer's**.

The team, who triedthe method on 15 patients with mild cognitive impairment, found that it identified those who would develop **Alzheimer's** two years before they were diagnosed.

The **test,** which costs £40 to download once onto an iPad, was found to be as accurate as a surgical**test** costing £1,500, and twice as accurate asmemory **tests** currently used by doctors.

The researchwill be presented at the Cambridge Science Festival and published in a scientific journal this year. Itcomes after scientists at University College London announced they had developed an**algorithm** to predict a person's risk of developing **Alzheimer's** in the next five years.

The study, which will be published in the journal BMC Medicine, used anonymised patient data on depression, stroke, alcohol intake, diabetes, heart **health,** weight, smoking and high blood pressure to create the **Dementia** Risk Score (DRS).

The resultpredicted **Alzheimer's** with 85 per cent accuracy in people aged between 60 to 79, the Mirror reported.

Both studies follow comments University College London biologist Professor John Hardy, who said that new treatments for **dementia** could be developed within the next decade.

The award-winning academic told an audience at the Royal Society in London that if incoming drug trial results are "positive" researchers will be on target for developing therapies for 2025.

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