

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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***pdp* expands its toolbox for dementia prevention with the Braincoach app**

If you have ever wondered how to keep your brain fit, this app is for you. Developed in the framework of the “[Programme for Dementia Prevention](#)” (*pdp*), it provides a treasure trove of information to help you stay mentally alert and motivated to implement positive changes in your lifestyle. It is available to all residents of Luxembourg on Google Play and Apple App Store for free, in French, German and English, as of 22nd October 2024 . Download it and get ready to take your first steps toward a healthy brain with your new “Brain coach”!

As life expectancy rises, so does the number of people living with an age-related disease such as dementia worldwide. With [nearly 8000 individuals concerned in Luxembourg](#), national prevention strategies are therefore crucial for reducing individual risk and slow down neurodegenerative processes. Operational in its current form since 2018, the *pdp* is a joint initiative between the Centre Hospitalier de Luxembourg, Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine of the University of Luxembourg and the Luxembourg Institute of Health, with the support of the [Health Directorate](#). It aims to prevent or at least delay dementia in an at-risk population through targeted lifestyle changes. The programme’s neuropsychologists have [assessed over 600 participants](#) with mild cognitive impairment, recommending personalised preventive measures based on each risk profile and free of cost. The suggested activities range from cognitive training and physical or social activities to dietary recommendations and psychological health counselling.

Since the process leading to dementia starts up to twenty years before symptoms become apparent and the diagnosis is made, the *pdp* is now launching an app targeting a wider audience. Designed to engage people in their forties and fifties, the right age to start early prevention, the Braincoach app aims to raise awareness and promote a healthy lifestyle. Based on “[Mijn Breincoach](#)” originally developed by [Maastricht University](#), with the support of the Dutch Ministry of Health, it has been specifically adapted for Luxembourg by the *pdp* team.

“We know that there are key risk factors for cognitive decline and that these can be actively and efficiently targeted through specific early lifestyle changes,” explains [Prof. Rejko Krüger](#), coordinator of the *pdp*. “We want to inform the Luxembourgish population on this important topic and empower people to act early on so that they keep their brain healthy and reduce their dementia risk in the future.”

This is where the Braincoach app comes into play. By browsing through the application, users learn how a combination of cognitive exercises, sport, a healthy diet and cardiovascular risk management, as well as addressing other risk factor, can reduce the risk of developing dementia by up to 45%. They can act on 12 modifiable risk factors, from smoking to lack of exercise and social isolation, scientifically proven to have an impact on dementia development and progression. Thanks to a comprehensive lifestyle questionnaire at the start of the app, users are directed toward content especially relevant for them. They receive daily reminders

with tips, quizzes and challenges to help them learn more about staying cognitively fit and reduce their personal risk.

Is your diet not up to par? Braincoach introduces you to healthy Mediterranean dishes and helpful dietary alternatives. Are you at risk for cardiovascular diseases? The app explains how a healthy heart and a healthy brain are connected, and how to take care of both. Does your routine lack physical activity? The app prompts you to investigate why and helps you increase your daily dose of exercise. “With the help of a blend of valuable information and recommendations available right there in your smartphone, we hope to motivate more people, either in the at-risk population or just among healthy adults, to adopt good habits early-on,” highlights Prof. Krüger. “We will also use the app to share details about local initiatives that have a similar objective, so that users can learn about all the activities available in Luxembourg.”

“We want to build a healthier future for our aging population. Hence, dementia prevention is a healthcare priority for Luxembourg. Thanks to this new app, we will gain even more visibility for our ongoing efforts in that regard,” concludes Martine Deprez, Minister of Health and Social Security. “It will help us reach a younger audience who should be made aware of the risks now and given the right tools to take charge of their health early on.”

The *pdp* Braincoach app is available for all adults concerned about staying physically and mentally fit as years go by, download it now >> <https://www.pdp-app.lu/>

*The *pdp* Braincoach app is not a replacement for medical advice so please consult your general practitioner or specialist regarding your personal medical situation.*

[Prof. Rejko Krüger](#) is the head of the [Translational Neuroscience](#) group at the [Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine](#) (LCSB) at the University of Luxembourg, the Director for [Transversal Translational Medicine](#) at the [Luxembourg Institute of Health](#) (LIH) and a neurologist at the [Centre Hospitalier de Luxembourg](#) (CHL).

About the Luxembourg Institute of Health

The Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH) is a public biomedical research organization focused on precision health and invested in becoming a leading reference in Europe for the translation of scientific excellence into meaningful benefits for patients.

LIH places the patient at the heart of all its activities, driven by a collective obligation towards society to use knowledge and technology arising from research on patient derived data to have a direct impact on people’s health. Its dedicated teams of multidisciplinary researchers strive for excellence, generating relevant knowledge linked to immune related diseases and cancer. The institute embraces collaborations, disruptive technology and process innovation as unique opportunities to improve the application of diagnostics and therapeutics with the long-term goal of preventing disease.

À propos du Centre Hospitalier de Luxembourg (CHL)

Hôpital de pointe avec 581 lits et centre de référence national pour de nombreuses disciplines, le Centre Hospitalier de Luxembourg (CHL) assure une activité de diagnostic et de traitement innovante répondant à des standards de qualité internationaux reconnus et accrédités par la Joint Commission International (JCI), ainsi qu'une mission d'enseignement et de recherche en tant qu'établissement public. www.chl.lu

About the Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine

The Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine (LCSB) is an interdisciplinary research centre at the University of Luxembourg. Its 250 staff members combine their expertise in a broad spectrum of disciplines - from computational biology to clinical and experimental neuroscience – to study the brain and its diseases. Research at the LCSB focuses on neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. Collaboration between biologists, medical and computer scientists, physicists, engineers as well as mathematicians offers new insights into complex biological mechanisms and disease processes, with the aim of developing new tools for diagnostics, prevention, and therapy.

The LCSB has established strategic partnerships with scientific partners worldwide and with all major biomedical research units in Luxembourg. The centre also carries out collaborative projects with hospitals and research-oriented companies, accelerating the translation of fundamental research results into clinical applications, for the benefit of patients.

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