



Fueling Research Aimed at Preventing Alzheimer's Disease for Future Generations

An Elevator Pitch for the Josephine and John Marr Alzheimer's Research Fund

- **The Josephine and John Marr Alzheimer's Research Fund at Brigham and Women's Hospital was established in 2015 aimed at preventing Alzheimer's disease for future generations.** The research is translational: information collected in the clinical studies – such as blood samples and brain scans – informs scientific discovery in the lab.
- **The Marr Fund is allowing a talented team of researchers to study a small group of 50- to 64-year-olds, nicknamed the Marr Cohort, who are at high risk for Alzheimer's but do not yet have the hallmark signs of the disease in their brains.** This effort includes developing specialized cognitive testing as well as novel imaging techniques, and – importantly – following the group over time. The information learned will be vital to prevention trials and furthering our understanding of the disease.
- **An investment in the Marr Fund is an investment in Alzheimer's clinical research broadly.** Data collected is accessible to researchers across the globe through the Harvard Aging Brain Study.
- **While there is much more to accomplish, the Marr Fund's support has already been a key catalyst for the research.** For example, Marr findings suggest that between the ages of 50 and 55, very few people have markers of amyloid (one hallmark of the disease), so the recently launched international prevention studies begin recruitment at age 55. In this way, the trial is optimized to yield valuable insights, while saving time and costs associated with the screening process.
- **The Marr Fund has also launched a generosity network.** Since the fund launched, over 5,000 gifts have been received from friends and strangers alike, totaling over \$3.56M (as of 6/30/2020). It has also inspired others to philanthropically support parallel research efforts, engaging their own social networks and raising millions in additional funds, including a recent \$25 million gift from Andrew and Kate Davis and the Shelby Cullom Davis Charitable Fund.
- **The Marr Fund is directed by a leading authority in Alzheimer's prevention research, Reisa Sperling, MD.** Her seminal work has culminated in the first-ever worldwide prevention trial in older adults (ages 65-85) at risk of Alzheimer's (This trial is called A4), and she and her collaborators recently designed and launched two new global Alzheimer's prevention trials referred to as the AHEAD Study.
- **Every 66 seconds, someone in America – a father, mother, sibling, best friend – develops Alzheimer's disease.** As the baby boomer generation ages, the disease is approaching epidemic proportions.



- **Alzheimer's disease, like heart disease, progresses in stages over a long period of time.** Building on pioneering work conducted by Brigham researchers, scientists have discovered that brain abnormalities caused by Alzheimer's begin well over a decade or two *before* the onset of memory and cognitive symptoms.
- **Similar to how statins work in heart disease, the hope and expectation is that starting treatment before symptoms are present, and treating patients for an extended period of time, will prevent symptomatic Alzheimer's disease.**
- **This is just the beginning. Continued support through the Marr Fund will be instrumental in furthering novel Alzheimer's prevention research over the coming years.**