

1 Dementia

- Dementia comes from the Latin word “demens,” meaning “out of mind.”
- It is the permanent loss of multiple intellectual functions.
- It is progressive deterioration of mental powers accompanied by changes in behavior and personality.
- Dementia is caused by the death of nerve cells.

2 Causes of Dementia

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Vascular Dementia
- Diffuse Lewy Body Disease
- Alcoholic Dementia
- Fronto-Temporal Dementia
- Others

3 Reversible Causes

5-20 of elderly patients who appear demented have treatable diseases...

- Depression
- Hormone imbalance
- Drug induced confusion
- Acute medical condition

4 Epidemiology

- Approximately four and a half million Americans are afflicted with Alzheimer's disease.
- Approximately 10 of individuals over age 65 have dementia.
- 47 of people over age 85 suffer from dementia
- Half of individuals with dementia will wander or become aggressive.
- Alzheimer's is most common type of dementia in persons over age 65.

5 What is Alzheimer's Disease?

- It is one type of dementia, often used synonymously with dementia.
- Alois Alzheimer was a German Physician who first described the disease in 1906.
- It is an illness of the brain. Large numbers of nerve cells in the brain die.
- The cause is unknown.
- Inheritance plays some role.
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6 Intellectual Symptoms

- Amnesia loss of memory function.
- Aphasia - loss of ability to understand spoken or written word and/or the inability to speak.
- Apraxia- loss of the ability to perform remembered motor tasks.
- Agnosia- loss of the ability to recognize sensory messages.
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7 Psychiatric Symptoms

- Depression.

- Hallucination and Delusions.
- Poor judgment, irritability, inappropriate behavior.
- Major personality changes.

8 Behavioral Symptoms

- Wandering
- Hoarding
- Undressing
- Resisting care
- Hostility

9 Warning Signs

- Repeating the same story, word-for-word.
- Forgetting how to cook, how to make repairs, play cards, etc.
- Losing one's ability to pay bills or balance one's checkbook.
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10 Warning Signs

- Getting lost in familiar surroundings or misplacing household items.
- Neglecting to bathe or wearing the same clothes over and over.
- Relying on someone to make decisions or answer questions they previously would have handled.
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11 Early Stage (3-5 Years)

- Mild amnesia- forget little details, frequently misplace things.
- Usually still speak and have good communications skills.
- May forget where things are located but still attend to personal needs.
- Full use of arms and legs.
- Still recognize familiar objects and persons.
- Appetite and sleep usually unchanged.

12 Middle Stage (3-5 Years)

- Patients have trouble finding words and use the wrong word or repeat a phrase.
- May not understand some words spoken they may get frustrated or angry.
- Start to forget how to dress themselves, lose control of bowel and bladder.
- May begin to fall.
- May forget faces of family even their own.
- May begin to lose weight.
- Sundowning or being more active at night.

13 Late Stages (3-10 Years)

- Patients remember few recent or past events.
- Vocabulary is limited and repeat things.
- Lose ability to speak or understand.
- No longer can perform ADLs.
- Forget how to walk or use walker.
- Usually cant recognize people and things.

- Require feeding and special diets, sleep more.

14 **Prevention**

- Individuals with higher intellect or continuous intellectual exercise into later life probably have a smaller chance for developing dementia and a slower rate of intellectual decline.
- Long-term participation in intellectually stimulating activities may lessen the risk for developing dementia and slow the progression of symptoms.
- Maintaining a strong social network 5 friends or more lessens the likelihood of isolation and depression and increases the level of intellectual stimulation.
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15 **What We Can Do**

- Control your weight.
- Blood pressure.
- Cholesterol and triglycerides.
- Sensible diet.
- Exercise.
- Diabetes.
- Depression.
- Vitamins and good nutrition.
- Limit alcohol consumption.

16 **Treatments**

- Medications are available for dementia to help slow the loss of memory function.
- Early treatment offers some hope.
- Psychiatric and behavior symptoms usually respond to medication.
- There is no treatment to stop nerve cell death in Alzheimers disease.
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17 **Caregivers Should Consider...**

- Importance of exercise and socialization.
- Nutrition and maintaining health.
- Planned activities that are structured and give meaning and sense of accomplishment.
- Allow them to complete as many tasks as possible.
- Remove hazards and check environment.

18 **Alzheimer's Patients**

They experience a mixture of emotions and sometimes express them...

- Confusion
- Frustration
- Anger
- Fear
- Uncertainty
- Grief
- Depression

19 **Sundowning**

- People with dementia have more behavioral problems in the evening.

- Frustrations and sensory stimulation build up.
- Throughout the day and by sundown they are not able to cope as well.
- They may begin to pace or wander.
- A structured daily routine needs to be maintained.

20 **Wandering**

- ¼- ½ of all individuals with dementia will wander.
- Important to not leave them alone.
- Look for changes in patterns.
- Secure doors.
- Keep well fed, hydrated, and toilet frequently.
- Activities.
- Redirect when possible.
- Identification bracelets/ Project Lifesaver.

21 **Communication**

- Approach slowly and calmly.
- Face them and make eye contact.
- Use touch to convey message.
- Speak slowly and distinctly.
- Use simple/ familiar words.
- Ask simple questions.
- One- step commands.
- Talk in pleasant manner.
- Use gestures.
- Limit choices.
- Allow time for information to be absorbed.
- Encourage/ praise the patient.

22 **Dos and Don'ts**

DO NOT...

- Argue
- Try to reason
- Confront
- Remind them they forget
- Question recent memory
- Take it personally

23 **Dos and Don'ts**

DO...

- Be patient and cheerful.
- Agree with them or distract them.
- Accept the blame.
- Respond to the feelings rather than the words.
- Repeat instructions.
- Give short one sentence explanations.
- Allow time for comprehension.

- Keep expectations realistic!
- Always remember the importance of love and affection!
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24 **Caregivers**

- It is a demanding 24 hours a day job.
- Always focus on the rewards and self satisfaction of knowing you are providing good care.
- The task becomes more difficult as the person deteriorates.
- It is normal for the Caregiver to grieve for their loved one.
- It is difficult to be social or go out to a restaurant to eat.
- The heartbreak of watching your loved one deteriorate along with the physical demands can be exhausting.
- The Caregiver must take care of themselves to avoid exhaustion and burnout.
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25 **Ways to Boost Caregiver Success**

- Educate your self about the disease.
- Learn care giving techniques.
- Understand the experience of your loved one.
- Avoid caregiver burnout.
- Maintain your own physical and mental health.
- Discuss the situation with family and friends.
- Do cognitive stimulation activities with your loved one.
- Foster communication with physicians.
- Take care of financial, legal and long-term care planning issues.
- Smile.
- Think positive.
- Reach out for care.