

**ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE
FACTS & STATISTICS**

Alzheimer's is a progressive, degenerative disease of the brain and the most common form of dementia.

An estimated 4 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder.

Some 19 million people have a family member who suffers from dementia.

1 in 10 people over 65 and nearly half of those over 85 have Alzheimer's. All people with Down syndrome show the neuropathology of AD by about age 35.

14 million Americans will have the disease by the mid-century unless a cure or a means of prevention is found.

Alzheimer's is the 4th leading cause of death among adults. Typical life expectancy is 8-10 years from the onset of symptoms.

Alzheimer's is the 3rd most expensive disease in the nation, after heart disease and cancer, with an average lifetime cost per patient of \$174,000.

**DIRECTORY OF
TOLL-FREE NUMBERS FOR
YOUR ASSISTANCE**



ACCESS (Mental health helpline)
Emergency and non-emergency
24 hours / 7 days
1-800-854-7771

Alzheimer's Association Helpline
24 hours / 7 days
1-800-660-1993

Elder Abuse Hotline
24 hours / 7 days
1-800-992-1660

Info Line
24 hours / 7 days
1-800-338-6993

National Institute on Aging
1-800-438-4390

ALZHEIMER'S



DISEASE

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is named after Dr. Alois Alzheimer, a German doctor. In 1906, Dr. Alzheimer noticed changes in the brain tissue of a woman who had died of an unusual mental illness. He found abnormal clumps (now called amyloid plaques) and tangled bundles of fibers (neurofibrillary tangles). Today these plaques and tangles in the brain are considered hallmarks of AD.

AD is the most common form of dementia (a brain disorder that seriously affects a person's ability to carry out daily activities) among older people. It involves the parts of the brain that control thought, memory, and language. Every day scientists learn more but right now there is still no cure for AD.

AD begins slowly. At first the only symptom may be mild forgetfulness. People with AD may have trouble remembering recent events, or names of familiar people or things. Look for these indicators that suggest someone you know may have beginning stages of AD:

SEVEN WARNING SIGNS OF AD:

1. Asking the same question over and over.
2. Repeating the same story, word for word.
3. Forgetting how to cook, or how to play cards – activities that were previously done with ease and regularity.
4. Losing one's ability to pay bills or balance one's checkbook.

5. Getting lost in familiar surroundings, or misplacing household objects.

6. Neglecting to bathe, or wearing the same clothes over again, while insisting they have taken a bath or that their clothes are still clean.

7. Relying on someone else to make decisions or answer questions they previously would have handled themselves.



SAFETY

Over 70 percent of people with AD live at home. Creating a safe environment can prevent many stressful and dangerous situations. Consider the following helpful tips:

- Install secure locks on all outside windows and doors, especially if the person is prone to wandering. Remove locks from bathroom doors to prevent person from accidentally locking himself or herself in.

- Label medications and keep them locked up. Also make sure knives, lighters, matches, and guns are secured and out of reach.

- Keep the house free from clutter. Remove any items that might contribute to a fall.

OPTIONS FOR CARE

Choosing a nursing home or an assisted living facility is a big decision. These tips may help when making your decision.

- Gather information about services in advance to give yourself time to explore your alternatives.

- Contact the places that interest you and make an appointment to visit. Talk to administration, staff and residents.

- Make a list of questions you would like to ask. Think about what is important to you, such as activities, policy on family participation, staff training, or special units for people with AD.

- Observe the way the facility is operated and how residents are treated. You may want to drop by again unannounced to see if your impressions are the same.

- Be sure to understand the terms of the contract and the financial agreement. You may want to have a lawyer review the documents with you before signing.

