

The following presentation is brought to you as a partnership between Dementia Friendly Denver and the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado.

This education program is offered at no cost to business, government, academic, faith and community groups throughout the greater Denver area.

To schedule a presentation for your group, contact dementiafriendlycolorado@gmail.com



Dementia 101

+ *Reducing Your Risk*

Basics of Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease

Optimism and Hope!

Promising Research Updates

**National Alzheimer's Plan
\$290 Billion Spent Annually for Care
\$2.8 Billion in Annual Research Funding**

Exploring The Facts

Info for the Curious, Concern and Committed

Typical Age-Related Cognitive Changes

- Making a bad decision once in awhile
- Missing an occasional monthly payment
- Forgetting which day it is but remembering quickly
- Sometimes forgetting which word to use
- Losing things from time to time

Dementia is NOT normal aging!

Reversible Conditions That Mimic Dementia

- Emotional disorders
- Metabolic disorders (e.g., hypothyroidism)
- Brain tumors
- Dehydration
- Sensory loss
- Vitamin deficiencies
- Infections
- Alcohol, drugs
- Medication interactions

Mild Cognitive Impairment

- Severe enough to show up on tests
- Not severe enough to affect daily life
- Increases risk of developing Alzheimer's disease

Understanding Dementia

What is the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia?

Most Common forms of dementia:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Vascular dementia
- Dementia with Lewy Bodies
- Parkinson's related dementia
- Frontotemporal Lobar degeneration
- Mixed dementia



What is Alzheimer's Disease?

Alzheimer's disease: (approximately 70% of cases)

- Is the most common form of dementia
- History of Alzheimer's disease
- Younger vs. regular onset
- Is a brain disorder, not a mental illness
- Is a progressive disease
- Currently has no cure, is eventually fatal
- Can be dormant for 20+ years
- Plaques and tangles cause impairment
- Affects over 5.8 million Americans
- 6th leading cause of death in US
- Someone develops Alzheimer's every 65 seconds in the US

For more information: 1.800.272.3900

Symptom Medications

- Cholinesterase inhibitors for mild to moderate symptoms
 - Donepezil (Aricept®)
 - Rivastigmine (Exelon®)
 - Galantamine (Razadyne®)
- NMDA receptor antagonist (glutamate regulator) for
 - Moderate to severe symptoms
 - Memantine (Namenda®)
- Combination – (Namzaric®)

Stages of Alzheimer's Disease

- Early Stage
 - Recent memory loss
 - Difficulty managing money, driving, social situations
- Middle Stage
 - Difficulty with language
 - Problems keeping track of personal items
 - May need help with grooming
- Late Stage
 - Long and short term memory affected
 - Needs care around the clock

What is Vascular Dementia?

Vascular dementia: (approx. 10 % of cases)

- Initial symptom is impaired judgment, decision making and planning
- Occurs from blood vessel blockages or damage from strokes
- Location, number and size of brain damage determines impairment

For more information: 1.800.787.6537

What is Dementia with Lewy Bodies?

Dementia with Lewy Bodies:

- Symptoms include memory loss and cognitive problems
- Also sleep disturbances, visual hallucinations, gait imbalance
- Clumps of protein can develop in cortex causing dementia

For more information: 1.800.539.9767

What is Parkinson's Related Dementia?

Parkinson's disease:

- As it progresses, often results in dementia similar to Lewy bodies or Alzheimer's
- Problems with movement are common
- Clumps of protein cause degeneration of nerve cells that produce dopamine

For more information: 303.861.1810

What is Frontotemporal Dementia?

Frontotemporal dementia:

- Symptoms include changes in personality and behavior and difficulties with language
- Nerve cells in front and side regions of brain are especially affected
- Symptoms generally develop at a younger age
- Survival is fewer years than with Alzheimer's

For more information: 1.866.507.7722

What is Mixed Dementia?

- More common than previously thought
- Happens when more than one cause of dementia occur simultaneously in the brain

How the Brain Works

- There are 100 billion nerve cells, or neurons, creating a branching network
- Signals traveling through the neuron forest form memories, thoughts and feelings
- Dementia impairs/destroys neurons



Major Dementia Risk Factors

- The primary risk factor is age
- Women are at the epicenter of dementia
 - Approx. 2/3 of dementia patients and caregivers are women
- African Americans and Latinos at higher risk
- Down Syndrome is correlated with Alzheimer's
- Family history can increase risk
- Two categories of related genes
 - Deterministic - Risk

Diagnosis: Earlier is Better

**Only 50% of those with dementia
get a diagnosis**

It Might Not Be Alzheimer's or Dementia

- Some detected problems can be treated or reversed
- Some can be life-threatening if not detected or treated promptly
- It's important not to ignore changes or assume it is Alzheimer's

Dementia - Reasons You Want to Know

More time to consider and plan for the future

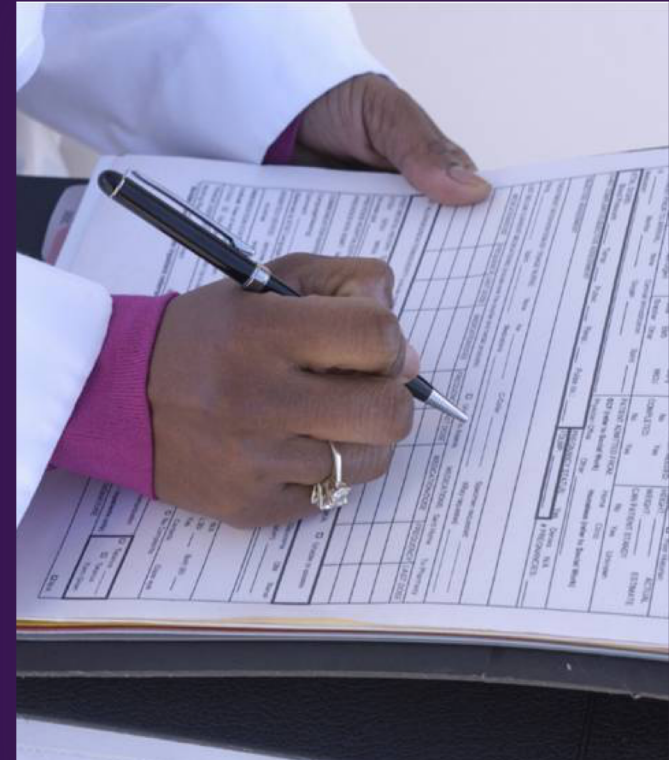
- ✓ Participate in arranging your own care
- ✓ Care options
- ✓ Legal and financial matters
- ✓ Safety and transportation
- ✓ Empower others to make decisions
- ✓ Build the right care team and social network

With Early Diagnosis You Can...

- Explore drug therapies that may provide symptom relief
- Early detection may help individuals remain independent longer
- Offers opportunity to participate in clinical trials

Selecting a Doctor

- Doctors who are experienced with Alzheimer's can diagnose the disease with 90 - 95% accuracy
- Specialists to consult include:
 - Geriatricians
 - Neurologists
- Referral lists are available at 800.272.3900 helpline



Preparing for the Doctor Visit

- Keep and bring a log
 - Write a list of symptoms, be specific
 - Include when, how often and where
 - Develop the list with input from other family members
- List current and previous health problems
- Bring all medication (prescriptions, vitamins, herbal supplements and over the counter medications)

Steps in the Assessment

1. Medical history
2. Mental status evaluation
3. Cognitive evaluations that test: memory, reasoning, visual-motor coordination, language skills
4. Physical examination, which includes:
 - Blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugars
 - Testing nervous system functions
 - A brain scan to detect a stroke
 - Lab tests to rule out other disorders
5. Psychiatric evaluation to rule out emotional symptoms
6. Interviews with family to get more information about changes

Breakthroughs in Diagnostic Tools

- PET scans
- CSF
- Biomarkers

82% of older adults say it is important to have memory checked annually, only 16% do

Emotions Run High

Confusion Denial
Guilt
Worry Fear
Shock Anger
Grief
Relief Acceptance

Know the 10 Signs: Early Detection Matters

1. Memory Changes that Disrupt Daily Life

- Forgetting something recently learned
- Asking the same questions over and over
- Relying on memory aids for things you used to remember

2. Challenges in Planning/Problem Solving

- Problems developing or following a plan
- Problems working with numbers
- Problems following a familiar recipe
- Difficulty keeping track of bills
- Challenges concentrating

3. Difficulty Completing Familiar Tasks

- Trouble driving to once familiar places
- Problems managing projects at work
- Difficulty remembering rules of a favorite game

4. Confusion with Time or Place

- Losing track of dates, seasons and passage of time
- Forgetting where one is or how one got there

5. Visual and Spatial Difficulties

- Diminishing ability to track visual surroundings
 - Difficulty reading
 - Trouble judging distance
 - Problems determining color or contrast

6. Problems with Words

- Problems with speaking and writing
- Difficulty tracking conversations
 - Stopping in the middle of conversations, unable to continue
 - Repeating what was already said
- Trouble with vocabulary
 - Difficulty finding the right word
 - Calling things the wrong name

7. Misplacing Things

- Putting things in unusual places
- Having increasing difficulty retracing steps to locate a missing item
- Accusing others of stealing “lost” items

8. Decreased or Poor Judgment

- Changes in decision making capabilities
- Poor judgment with money
 - Giving large amounts to telemarketers
 - Spending more impulsively

9. Withdrawal from Work/Social Activities

- Losing interest in hobbies
- Losing track of a favorite sports team
- Avoiding responsibilities at work
- Avoiding family gatherings or social situations

10. Changes in Mood and Personality

- Increasing signs of:
 - Confusion
 - Suspicion
 - Fear
 - Anxiety
 - Agitation

What Should I Do if I See Some of the 10 Signs?

- Talk with family and friends about your concerns
- Make a doctor appointment
- Getting the right care asap is crucial!

Caregiver Overview

- Over 16 million caregivers care for the 5.8 million Americans living with dementia
- In Colorado, over 200,000 caregivers care for more than 73,000 people with dementia
- 18.5 billion hours in unpaid care, \$234 billion value
- 74% of dementia caregivers report being concerned about their own health
- Self-care and respite breaks are critical

Caregiver Responsibilities

Daily Living

- ✓ Medication Management
- ✓ Nutrition
- ✓ Hygiene
- ✓ Household Management
- ✓ Transportation

Advance Planning

- ✓ Medical Management
- ✓ Legal Issues
- ✓ Financial Planning and Management
- ✓ Care Options

Understanding Dementia Behaviors

- Repetitive Questioning
- Agitation
- Anxiety
- Shadowing
- Sundowning
- Tearfulness
- Sleeplessness
- Suspicion
- Pacing
- Wandering

Confusion = Discomfort = Behavior

Dementia Communication Tips

- Use short sentences and basic words
- Speak slowly and clearly – less is more
- Avoid baby talk
- Answer repetitive questions cheerfully
- Avoid questions and quizzing of them
- Pay attention to your tone
- Allow plenty of time for conversations
- Limit distractions
- Focus on feelings, not facts
- Avoid criticizing, correcting and arguing
- Redirect to pleasant activities when upsets occur

Patience, Patience, Patience!

Dementia Interaction Tips

- Establish and stick to a daily routine
- Create a calm environment
- Music is a great connector
- Keep clutter to a minimum
- Avoid forcing activities – suggest instead
- Strive for balance of over and under stimulation
- Monitor interaction with children and pets
- Adjust temperature and lighting to their needs
- Approach from the front
- 1 hour for us = 5 hours for them
- Go with the flow unless safety is involved

Be Flexible and Adaptable

Dementia Caregiver Resources

Alzheimer's Disease: 800.272.3900

Vascular Dementia: 800.787.6537

Lewy Body Dementia: 800.539.9767

Parkinson's Disease: 800.223.2732

Frontotemporal Dementia: 866.507.7722

Brain Health & Risk Reduction

12 Ways to Care for Your Brain

**Adopting These Simple Lifestyle Habits
May Reduce Risk or Delay Onset**

1. **BREAK A SWEAT** - Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates heart rate and increases blood flow. Studies have found that physical activity reduces risk of cognitive decline.
2. **FUEL UP RIGHT** - Eat a balanced diet high in fruits and vegetables to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Blueberries!
3. **FOLLOW YOUR HEART** - Risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke (obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes) negatively impact your cognitive health.

4. **TALK TO YOUR DOC** - Discuss changes in cognitive health with your doctor during your annual physical.
5. **MIND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH** - Some studies link depression with cognitive decline. Seek treatment if you have depression or anxiety. Manage stress.
6. **BUTT OUT** - Smoking increases the risk of cognitive decline.

7. **HIT THE BOOKS** - Formal education may help reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Take a class at a local college, community center or online.
8. **STUMP YOURSELF** - Challenge your mind. Build a piece of furniture or play games of strategy.
9. **BUDDY UP** - Staying socially engaged supports brain health. Find ways to be a part of your local community or share activities with family and friends.

10. **LISTEN UP** - Studies show that untreated mid life hearing loss can increase risk for cognitive decline. Treat hearing loss to stay connected and engaged.

11. **CATCH SOME ZZZ'S** - Not getting enough sleep may result in problems with memory and thinking.

12. **HEADS UP!** - Brain injury can raise risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seatbelt and use a helmet when participating in sports or riding a bike.

Thank You!

For more information about the free services and programs provided by the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado and Dementia Friendly Denver, visit:

**alz.org/co
dementiafriendlydenver.org**

**To schedule this presentation for your group,
or to volunteer or donate, contact
dementiafriendlycolorado@gmail.com**

