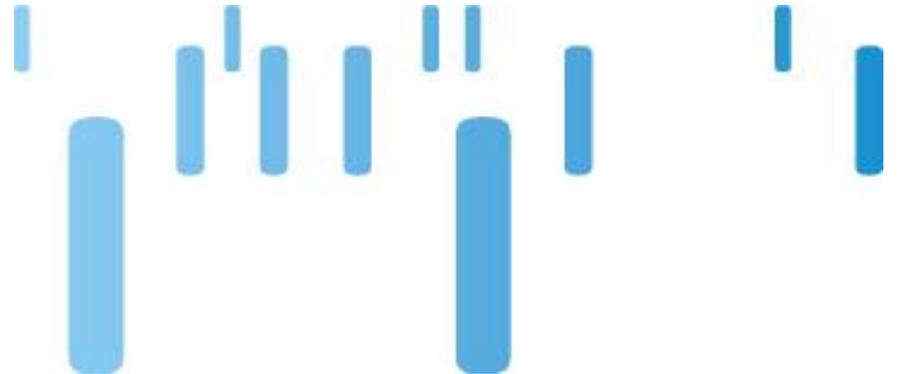


## Alzheimer's Disease

life  beats



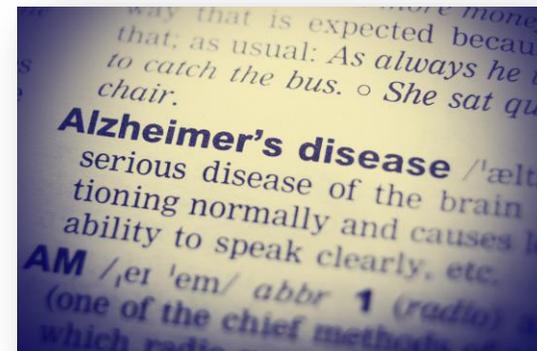
## What is Alzheimer's Disease?

Alzheimer's is a progressive brain disease that causes problems with memory, reasoning, behavior and motor skills

- Symptoms of Alzheimer's slowly worsen over time and the disease is ultimately fatal
- Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, which is defined as a loss of cognitive functioning and behavioral abilities that interfere with daily life

Other forms of dementia include:

- Vascular dementia
- Dementia with Lewy bodies
- Frontotemporal dementia



47 million people suffer from Alzheimer's and other Dementias worldwide

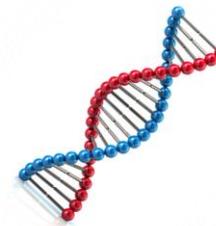
## Who's at Risk?

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- Risk for Alzheimer's increases greatly with age
- After reaching 65, one's risk of developing Alzheimer's doubles every five years
- Almost fifty percent chance of having it by age 85
- Before age of 65, it is known as early/younger-onset Alzheimer's

Research has identified many possible, probable and known risk factors:

1. Age
2. Genetic Factors
  - a. APOE4 gene variant: 1 parent= 4x greater risk & both parents= 10x greater
3. Health
  - a. Cardiovascular health and stroke victims
  - b. Depression and social isolation



## Signs and Symptoms – Early Stage

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Alzheimer's disease can be difficult to identify in its early stages because memory troubles as we age is normal

The classic distinction with Alzheimer's is difficulty in forming new memories – what will appear to be short-term memory loss

Other early signs include:

- confusion (not recognizing familiar surroundings or becoming easily lost)
- difficulty with words (shrinking vocabulary)
- trouble with basic math.

**It is important to remember that this disease affects everyone differently**

## Signs and Symptoms – Middle Stage

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The middle stage of the disease will show a worsening of these symptoms:

- loss of reading and writing skills
- difficulty with complex motor tasks
- loss of previously intact long-term memories

It is also more common at this stage to see changes in behavior and personality.

- “*Sundowning*” - increased confusion and unrest in the evening.



## Signs and Symptoms – Late Stage

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It is important to know that Alzheimer's is a degenerative disease that progressively gets worse over time

What late stages of Alzheimer's looks like:

- Limited language capabilities
- Severe memory loss
- Little mobility



Behavioral changes are generally manifested as apathy and inactivity. People with late-stage Alzheimer's are completely reliant on caregivers

## Treatment for Alzheimer's

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Currently, no treatment for Alzheimer's is able to stop or even slow down the disease process

Approved drugs aim to lessen symptoms and only work for a limited amount of time, for a limited number of people

As a result, managing Alzheimer's involves a combination of efforts:

- Medication – limited relief
- Assistance of a caregiver
- Careful monitoring of symptoms
- Making lifestyle choices based on the patient's needs
  - Encouraging daily exercise such as a half-hour walk
  - Encouraging a healthy diet; as people with Alzheimer's may lose interest in food, cooking and even forgetting to eat
  - Help maintain a stimulating social environment

## Special Considerations and Resources

Because current medications offer limited relief from symptoms, managing Alzheimer's disease involves the dedicated help of a caregiver, a person who can provide assistance, guidance and comfort to the Alzheimer's patient.

- Trained medical personnel
- Family member – a child, sibling, or spouse.

### Resources:

1. [Therapeutics](#)
2. [Global Alzheimer's Platform](#)
3. [Caregiving](#)
4. [The Healthy Brain Initiative – CDC \(PDF\)](#)
5. [World Alzheimer's Report 2015](#)

