

Alzheimer's Disease

A PATIENT EDUCATION GUIDE



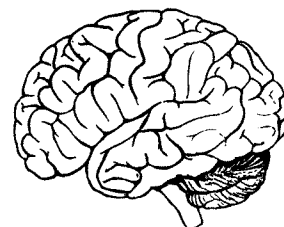
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What is Alzheimer's Disease?

Alzheimer's disease is a condition that causes changes in the brain that get worse over time. It causes up to 80 percent of all dementia cases.



Alzheimer's disease attacks brain cells, causing them to deteriorate and die. This loss of brain cells causes symptoms such as memory problems, confusion and a drop in mental function.

Although the disease affects millions of people, it is not a normal part of aging.

It may be tempting to dismiss unusual behavior and mild memory loss, but it is important to see your doctor and get a diagnosis as soon as possible. The earlier Alzheimer's is diagnosed, the sooner its symptoms can be treated.

Early-onset Alzheimer's is a form of the disease that begins before age 65, often in people in their 40s and 50s. Fewer than 5 percent of Alzheimer's patients have early-onset Alzheimer's.

What is Dementia?

People often use the terms dementia and Alzheimer's interchangeably, but there is a difference. Dementia is an umbrella term for a set of symptoms regarding memory and mental function.

There are more than 70 different causes of dementia, though Alzheimer's disease is its most common cause. A doctor will conduct various mental and physical exams to diagnose the cause of dementia, and treatments may vary depending on the cause.

