

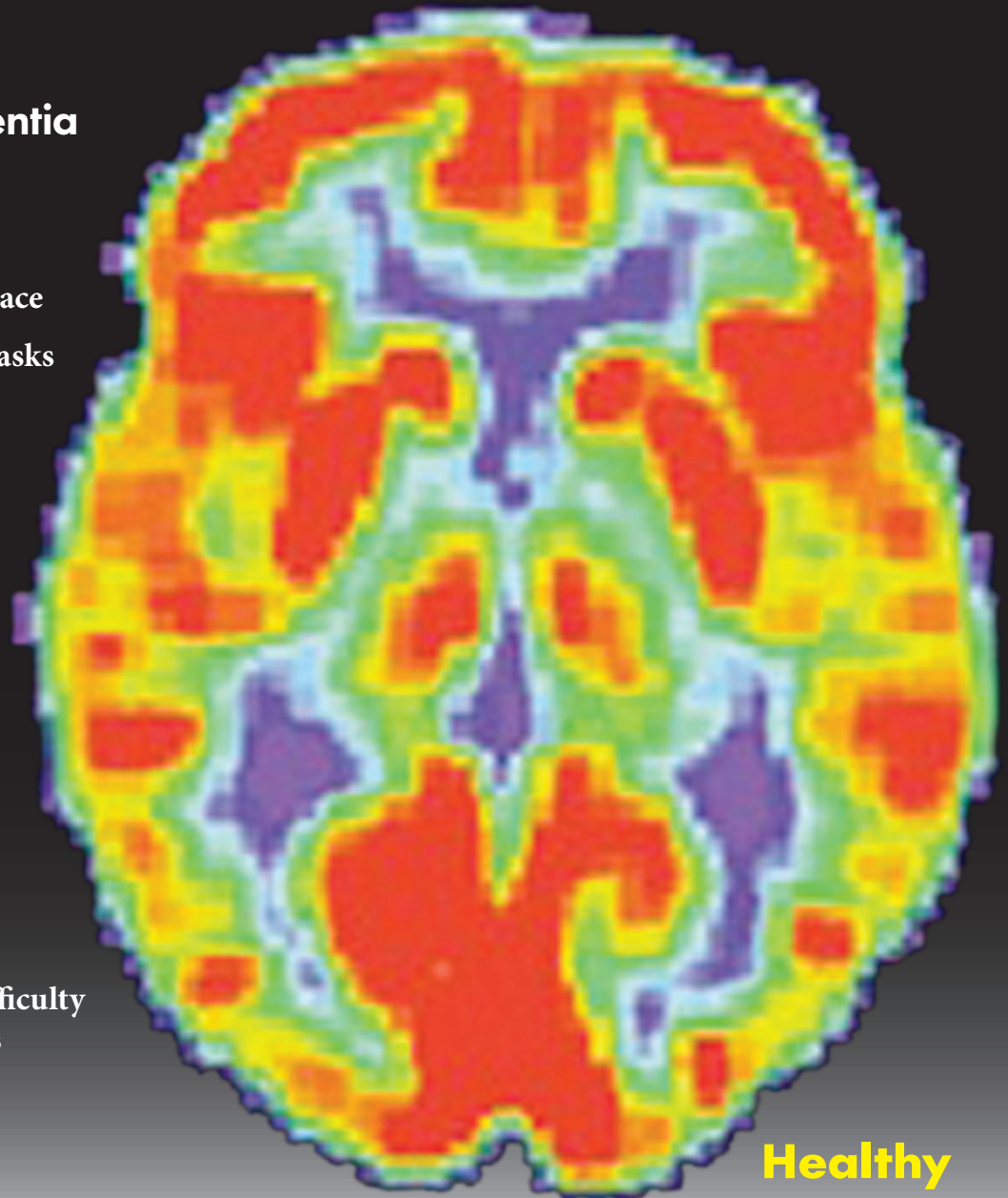
A Personal Guide to Organic Brain Disorders

WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

Dementia is the decline of cognitive functions of sufficient severity to interfere with two or more of a person's daily living activities. It is not a disease in itself, but rather a group of symptoms which may accompany certain diseases or physical conditions.

Top Ten Signs of Dementia

1. Progressive short-term memory loss
2. Confusion of time and place
3. Difficulty with familiar tasks
4. Misplaced objects
5. Problems with abstract thinking
6. Poor judgment, poor problem solving ability
7. Lack of initiative and motivation
8. Personality changes, more irritable or frustrated
9. Mood changes, increased anxiety
10. Language difficulties, difficulty finding words and names



**Healthy
Brain**

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WHO GETS DEMENTIA?

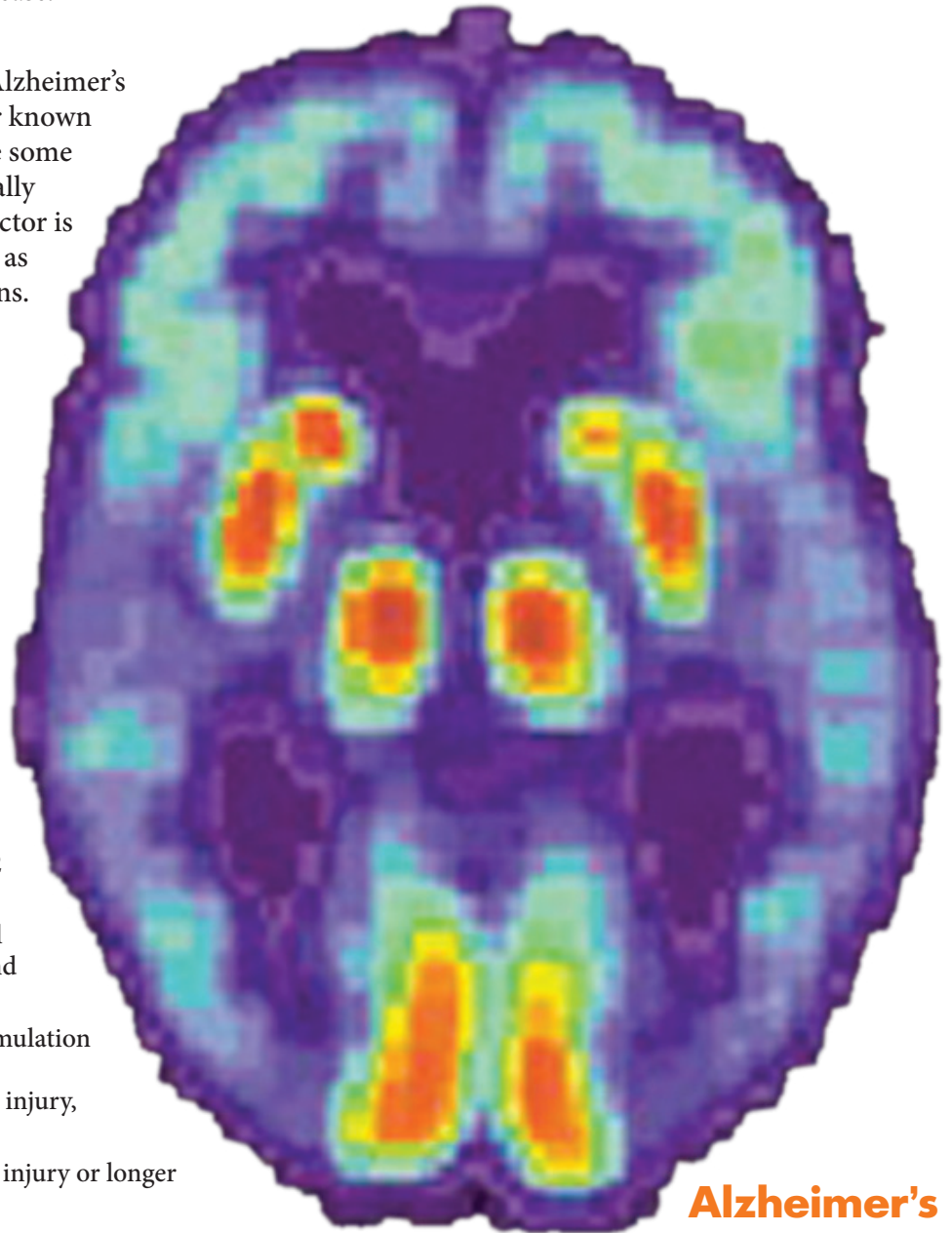
Dementia is considered a late-life disease because it tends to develop mostly in elderly people. About 5% to 8% of all people age 65 and above have some form of dementia. This number doubles every five years above that age. It is estimated that as many as half of people in their 80s have dementia. Early-onset Alzheimer's is an uncommon form of dementia that strikes people younger than age 65. Of all the people with Alzheimer's disease, 5 to 10 percent develop symptoms before age 65. Early-onset Alzheimer's has been known to develop between the ages 30 and 40, but it is more common to see someone in his or her 50s who has the disease.

WHAT CAUSES DEMENTIA?

The most common form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease, but there are as many as 50 other known dementias and related disorders. Because some causes of dementia can be cured or partially treated, it is very important that your doctor is thorough when making the diagnosis, so as not to miss potentially treatable conditions. The frequency of "treatable" causes of dementia is believed to be about 10%.

There are several things that could cause dementia:

- 👤 Diseases that cause degeneration or loss of nerve cells in the brain such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Huntington's.
- 👤 Diseases that affect blood vessels, such as stroke, which can cause a disorder known as multi-infarct dementia.
- 👤 Toxic reactions, like excessive alcohol or drug use.
- 👤 Nutritional deficiencies, like vitamin B12 and folate deficiencies.
- 👤 Infections that affect the brain and spinal cord, such as AIDS dementia complex and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.
- 👤 Certain types of hydrocephalus, an accumulation of fluid in the brain that can result from developmental abnormalities, infections, injury, or brain tumors.
- 👤 Head injury – either a single severe head injury or longer term smaller injuries.
- 👤 Illnesses other than in the brain, such as kidney, liver, and lung diseases, can all lead to dementia.



**Alzheimer's
Brain**

WHAT ARE SOME FORMS OF DEMENTIA?

PROGRESSIVE DEMENTIAS

There are several types of progressive dementia (dementias that get worse over time). The most common are:

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

DEFINED: Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia, accounting for 50-70% of cases and affecting as many as 5.2 million Americans. Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, degenerative disease that attacks the brain and results in impaired memory, thinking and behavior.

SYMPTOMS: Gradual memory loss • Decline in ability to perform routine tasks • Disorientation to time and place • Impairment of judgment • Personality changes • Difficulty learning new information • Loss of language and communication skills

From the onset of symptoms, the progression of Alzheimer's disease can take 4 to 20 years, and the rate of progression varies from person to person. The disease eventually leaves the person unable to care for himself. While a definite **DIAGNOSIS** of Alzheimer's disease is possible only through the examination of brain tissue, usually done at autopsy, it is important for a person with dementia symptoms to undergo a thorough examination by a neurologist or other dementia specialist.

Approximately 20% of suspected Alzheimer's disease cases prove to be caused by a medical condition other than Alzheimer's. Some of these conditions are treatable. Advancements have been made with biomarkers taken from cerebra-spinal fluid and PET scans of the brain that can positively identify this disease 95% of the time.

VASCULAR DEMENTIA

DEFINED: The second most common type of dementia is vascular dementia. This occurs when a stroke interrupts blood flow to the brain and impairs cognitive function. The onset of vascular dementia can be sudden as many strokes can occur before symptoms appear. Many times, vascular dementia may seem similar to Alzheimer's disease.

Vascular dementia is not reversible or curable, but treating underlying conditions such as high blood pressure can help to modify the disease's progression. Vascular dementia is **DIAGNOSED** through an examination of scans such as a CT scan or an MRI.

CADASIL is a form of vascular dementia. Most individuals with CADASIL have a family history of the disorder, and it's usually characterized by migraine headaches and multiple strokes leading to dementia.

SYMPTOMS: White matter lesions throughout the brain • Cognitive deterioration • Seizures • Vision problems • Psychiatric problems such as severe depression • Changes in behavior and personality

DIFFUSE LEWY BODY DEMENTIA

DEFINED: Diffuse Lewy body dementia is another degenerative brain disorder, and a common form of dementia. In Lewy body dementia (LBD), microscopic protein deposits (Lewy bodies) are found in the dying nerve cells.

SYMPTOMS: Cognitive impairment • Fluctuation of alertness • Visual hallucinations • Severe motor defects • Reduced facial expression • Shuffling gait • Tremors • Rigidity • Unsteady gait and balance, leading to frequent falls

REFERENCES:

MAYO CLINIC, ASSOCIATION FOR FRONTOTEMPORAL DEMENTIAS, AND BRAIN MATTERS RESEARCH

FRONTO-TEMPORAL DEMENTIA

DEFINED: Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration is also called “FTD” or “Pick’s disease”, and is a term that describes three disease subtypes:

- Frontotemporal dementia (FTD)
- Primary progressive aphasia (PPA)
- Semantic depression (SD)

FTD represents about 10-20% of all dementia cases, and it is one of the most common dementias affecting a younger population. The average age of diagnosis is about 60, with symptoms beginning in a person’s 40’s or 50’s. The course of the disease ranges from 3 to 17 years.

SYMPTOMS: Uninhibited and socially inappropriate behavior • Inappropriate sexual behavior • Loss of concern about personal appearance and hygiene • Compulsive eating and oral fixation • Apathy, loss of initiative, lack of concern for others • Speech and language difficulties • Memory loss

OTHER DISORDERS LINKED TO DEMENTIA

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

DEFINED: A progressive disorder of the central nervous system which affects more than one million Americans. People with Parkinson’s disease lack dopamine, which is important to the central nervous system and the ability to control muscle activity.

SYMPTOMS: Tremors • Stiffness in limbs and joints • Speech impediments • Difficulty in initiating physical movement/slow movement

Late in the course of the disease, some patients develop dementia and eventually Alzheimer’s disease. Medications are useful in improving motor impairments, but no cure is available to correct the mental changes that occur.

HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE

DEFINED: An inherited, degenerative brain disease affecting the mind and body. The disease usually begins mid-life.

SYMPTOMS: Intellectual decline • Irregular and involuntary movements • Personality changes • Memory disturbance • Slurred speech • Impaired judgment • Psychiatric problems

A genetic marker linked to Huntington’s disease has been identified, and researchers are working to learn more about the gene itself. No treatment is available to stop the progression of the disease though some of the symptoms can be controlled by medication.

DEMENTIA PUGILISTICA

DEFINED: Also called chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or “boxer’s dementia.” It’s caused by repeated head trauma, such as that experienced by boxers.

SYMPTOMS: Memory problems • Poor coordination • Impaired speech • Tremors • Slow movement • Muscle stiffness

A single head injury can cause post traumatic dementia, which is similar to dementia pugilistica but may include long-term memory problems.

CREUTZFELDT-JAKOB DISEASE (CJD)

DEFINED: A rare, fatal brain disorder most likely caused by a virus that progresses very swiftly.

SYMPTOMS: Failing memory • Behavioral changes • Lack of coordination • Pronounced mental deterioration
Involuntary movements • Blindness • Weakness in the arms and/or legs • Eventual coma

Death in CJD patients is usually caused by infections while bedridden and unconscious. A definitive **DIAGNOSIS** of CJD can be obtained only through an examination of brain tissue, usually done at autopsy.

AIDS DEMENTIA COMPLEX

DEFINED: A type of dementia that HIV patients can develop. It is reported that about 15-30% of people with HIV have mild physical and psychological problems with the nervous system.

SYMPTOMS: Poor concentration • Forgetfulness • Loss of short- or long-term memory • Social withdrawal • Slowed thinking • Short attention span • Irritability • Apathy • Weakness • Poor coordination • Vision problems

DEMENTIA SYMPTOMS THAT CAN BE REVERSED

Some dementia or dementia-like symptoms can be reversed. Conditions that may cause or mimic dementia include depression, brain tumors, nutritional deficiencies, head injuries, hydrocephalus, infections (meningitis, syphilis), drug reactions and thyroid problems. It is imperative that all persons experiencing memory deficits or confusion undergo a thorough diagnostic work up. This requires examination by a physician experienced in the diagnosis of dementia disorders and detailed laboratory testing. The examination should include a re-evaluation of all medications. This process will help the patient obtain treatment for reversible conditions, aid the patient and family in planning future care, and provide important medical information for future generations.

YOUR PHYSICIAN CAN IDENTIFY AND TREAT:

- Infections and immune disorders resulting from fever or other side effects of your body's attempt to fight off an infection.
- Heart and lung problems that deprive the brain of oxygen.
- Poisoning. Dementia symptoms can occur as a result of exposure to heavy metals, such as lead or manganese, and other poisons, such as pesticides. People who have abused alcohol and recreational drugs also sometimes display symptoms. In all of these instances, symptoms may go away after treatment or after exposure to the substance has ended.
- Brain tumors.
- Subdural hematomas. These are caused by bleeding between the brain's surface and its outer covering.
- Normal-pressure hydrocephalus.
- Depression.
- Nutritional deficiencies. Symptoms can occur as a result of dehydration, not having enough thiamin (vitamin B-1) – a condition common in people with chronic alcoholism – and deficiencies in vitamins B-6 and B-12.
- Metabolic problems and endocrine abnormalities. These include thyroid problems, too little sugar in the bloodstream (hypoglycemia), too little or too much sodium or calcium, and an impaired ability to absorb vitamin B-12.
- Anoxia. This condition, also called hypoxia, occurs when not enough oxygen gets to organ tissue. Causes include heart attack, severe asthma, carbon monoxide poisoning, strangulation, high-altitude exposure or an overdose of anesthesia. Recovery depends on the severity of the oxygen deprivation. Symptoms may occur during recovery.

With recent advancements, specialized research centers are testing many new investigational drugs that are designed to treat, and in some cases, potentially slow or prevent the progress of these devastating dementias.

Always consult your physician regarding the latest recommended treatments for any of the conditions discussed in this brochure.

CORE SERVICES

- 11 Specialized Adult Day Service Centers in Palm Beach, Martin, and St. Lucie Counties
- 24-Hour Crisis Line (1-800-394-1771)
- Family Nurse Consultant Services
- Education and Training

RESOURCES

- Annual Educational Conference
- Caregiver Support Groups
- Information and Referral
- Quarterly Publication
- Volunteer Program
- Case Management

HEADQUARTERS

800 Northpoint Parkway, Suite 101-B
West Palm Beach, FL 33407
Tel: 561-683-2700 Fax: 561-683-7600
www.alzcare.org

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLE

We place a safety net around patients and caregivers every day.™

ALZHEIMER'S 24-HOUR CRISIS LINE

1-800-394-1771

SPECIALIZED ADULT DAY SERVICE CENTERS

Palm Beach County

BOCA RATON

FORREST LATNER CENTER

Advent Lutheran Church
300 East Yamato Road
561-391-6955
License # 7299

DELRAY BEACH

BETTY KROLL CENTER

Seacrest Presbyterian Church
2703 Seacrest Boulevard, North
561-330-3541
License # 9128

GREENACRES

(SE HABLA ESPANOL)

Pines Plaza
2164 Jog Road
561-432-0668
License # 8998

LAKE WORTH

Our Savior Lutheran Church
1615 Lake Avenue
561-585-7781
License # 8852

PAHOKEE

470 East First Street
561-924-7283
License # 9032

PALM BEACH GARDENS

Nativity Lutheran Church
4075 Holly Drive
561-630-4724
License # 8940

RIVIERA BEACH

Blue Heron Church of God
2600 Avenue H West
561-840-0651
License # 9085

WEST PALM BEACH

BAXTER FOUNDATION CENTER
800 Northpoint Parkway, Suite 101-A
561-683-2700
License # 8837

Martin County

NORTH STUART

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
772-692-6981
License # 8928

STUART

Carolyn Jones Center
Stuart Congregational Church
3110 SE Aster Lane
772-220-2773
License # 8866

St Lucie County

FT. PIERCE

St. Peters Lutheran Church
2900 South Jenkins Road
772-466-3261
License # 9046

FAMILY NURSE CONSULTANT LOCATIONS

BOCA RATON & DELRAY BEACH

15200 Jog Road, Suite 206
Delray Beach, FL 33446
561-381-0231

BOYNTON BEACH AND WESTERN

PALM BEACH COUNTY

15200 Jog Road, Suite 206
Delray Beach, FL 33446
561-381-0231

CENTRAL PALM BEACH COUNTY

2164 Jog Road
Greenacres, FL 33415
561-432-0668

RIVIERA BEACH

Blue Heron Church of God
2600 Avenue H
Riviera Beach, Florida 33404
561-842-0472

WEST PALM BEACH &

NORTHERN PALM BEACH COUNTY

800 Northpoint Parkway
Suite 101-A
West Palm Beach, FL 33407
561-683-2700

MARTIN COUNTY

1111 S. Federal Highway
Suite #116
Stuart, FL 34994
772-223-6351

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

St. Peter's Lutheran Church
2900 South Jenkins Road
Ft. Pierce, FL 34981
772-460-9166

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