

Alzheimer's Disease:



***Awareness,
Understanding,
Support and Care***

Alzheimer's Request

Do not ask me to remember, don't try to make me understand.
Let me rest and know you're with me, kiss my cheek and hold my hand.

I'm confused beyond your concept, I'm sad and sick and lost.
All I know is that I need you to be with me at all cost.

Do not lose your patience with me, do not scold or curse or cry.
I can't help the way I'm acting, I can't be different though I try.

Just remember that I need you, that the best of me is gone.
Please don't fail to stand beside me, love me 'till my life is gone.

Alzheimer's Disease - What is it?

Alzheimer's Disease –

- Also called senile dementia - the most common cause of dementia among older adults
- A progressive disease that destroys memory and other important mental functions, such as thought and speech
- Causes 50 - 70% of all dementia
- More than 5.4 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's Disease
- The 6th leading cause of death in the U.S.

Dementia vs Alzheimer's Disease

Dementia

- An umbrella term for a set of symptoms including impaired thinking and memory
- Associated with the cognitive decline of aging
- Some forms of dementia, such as drug interaction or a vitamin deficiency, can be temporary or reversible

Alzheimer's Disease

- Degenerative and incurable at this time, not reversible



Alzheimer's is one of the Largest Social, Medical, and Economic Crises in our Nation's History

- More than 5 million Americans live with Alzheimer's, a disease that robs memories before taking lives
- Begins to develop in the brain 20-30 years before diagnosis
- 2/3 of those diagnosed are women—and no one knows why
- 2/3 of Alzheimer's caregivers are women, many of whom will have to take time off or resign from their jobs

ALZHEIMER

Alzheimer's is one of the Largest Social, Medical, and Economic Crises - Part 2

- A woman in her 60's - twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's over the course of her lifetime than breast cancer
- After 60 – a woman has a 1 in 6 chance of developing Alzheimer's vs nearly 1 in 11 chance in a man
- By 2050, 16 million in the US and 135 million worldwide will have fallen victim to this disease
- Nearly half of Americans aren't concerned about getting Alzheimer's, because it doesn't run in their families
- Research proves that genes are not your destiny

Know the Facts – Alzheimer's Disease

- Not a natural part of aging
- 100% fatal - There is no treatment or cure
- Progresses in stages from: Early Signs and Symptoms, to Mild Stage, to Moderate stage, and ending with Final Stage - which is severe and where the individual cannot communicate and is completely dependent on others for their care
- Of the top 10 causes of death in America, the only disease without any effective treatment or cure
- If Alzheimer's runs in your family that does not necessarily mean you will get it
- Conversely, if it does not run in your family, you are still at risk
- Healthy habits, such as diet, exercise and lifestyle changes, can prevent or slow the symptoms

Know the Economics

- Nation's most expensive disease
- Cost in US - \$226 billion in medical treatment, caregiving costs, and lost wages of family members taking care of loved ones
- Currently on track to bankrupt Medicaid
- Federal funding for Alzheimer's research is less than \$1 billion a year, compared to \$5 billion for cancer and \$3 billion for HIV/AIDS
- More funding for research is needed to find treatments and a cure for this disease
- Expected cost of Alzheimer's is projected to reach \$1.1 trillion by 2050
- Costs exceed other terminal illnesses, such as cancer and heart disease
- Cost of care for a person with dementia over the last five years of their life is about \$288,000



Alzheimer's Treatment

- No current cure
- Certain cognitive enhancing medications can improve symptoms
- Current Alzheimer's treatments cannot stop the disease from progressing
- Treatments can temporarily slow the worsening of dementia symptoms and improve quality of life
- Healthy habits can prevent or slow the symptoms
- A Mediterranean diet, heavy in omega-3 fats, such as in salmon, trout, mackerel, seaweed and sardines, is a health way to treat and possibly prevent the disease and its progression

Alzheimer's Prevention

- According to the Weill Cornell Medicine's Alzheimer's Prevention Clinic, focusing on the emerging science of dementia risk assessment and prevention strategies, states that the goal is to assess threats and identify fixable issues known to affect brain health
- Opportunity lies in modifying risk factors: what you eat, how you sleep, blood pressure, overall fitness, and even your waistline (abdominal fat raises your risk threefold)

Alzheimer's Prevention (continued)

- The more educated you are, the more information your brain stores and the better it accesses what you've learned
- More educational experiences and new mentally stimulating activities add more connections and pathways in the brain, developing a “cognitive brain reserve”
- If some pathways grow weak, the brain has extra paths to follow

Programs

The Women's Alzheimer's Movement

- Founded by Maria Shriver
- Committed to finding out why Alzheimer's discriminates against women
- Answering the question of why women are disproportionately affected by Alzheimer's; may lead to a cure for all

www.thewomensalzheimersmovement.org

Model Program - Annunciation Senior Center

- Mission - to create an environment stimulating the spiritual, social and interpersonal interaction of seniors in a loving, safe and comfortable environment through Orthodox based fellowship
- Located in the Annunciation Orthodox Center, Baltimore, MD, the Senior Center team organizes and conducts a wonderful array of activities on a daily basis
- Liturgical services, sacraments and religious events weekly



Contact Information

Phone: (410) 752-3525

25 West Preston Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Email: orthodoxseniorcenter@gmail.com

Facebook Page:

facebook.com/AnnunciationSeniorCenter

Annunciation Senior Center

Daily Experience:

- Activities designed to stimulate mind and body, promoting wellness and maintaining a happy and healthy life
- Modest levels of physical activity intended to keep our seniors active
- Healthy and balanced home cooked meals
- Current events, dialogue in Greek and English
- Word and board games
- Guest speakers and performers
- Field trips include museums, restaurants, festivals and other interesting events
- Safe and reliable transportation

Caregivers

- Over 15.9 million family members and friends are providing over 18 billion hours of unpaid care to their loved ones with Alzheimer's and other dementias
- Significant emotional, physical, and financial cost to everyone involved



Caregiving

- Most Americans don't know what the disease entails, who it impacts, or how to prepare for long-term caregiving.
- Sixty-six percent of Americans want a family member to be their primary caregiver
- More than half haven't even talked to their families about it, having no idea what it will cost or involve
- Only 1 in 4 seniors have had the conversation with their children
- Only 1 in 3 millennials have talked with their parents about the issue



Information that Family Members Need to Know

Know the Person's Legal and Financial Matters

- **To whom do they owe money or who may owe money to them**
- **Computer passwords**
- **Bank accounts, passwords, and safety deposit box info**
- **Credit cards and PIN numbers**
- **Stocks, bonds, investment or annuity accounts**
- **Real estate**
- **Insurance policies**
- **Legal papers including: Power of Attorney, Health Care Power of Attorney, Current Will**
- **Names and contact information of their Attorney, Accountant, Physicians, Companies or help they use**

Five Wishes

MY WISH FOR:

The Person I Want to Make Care Decisions for Me When I Can't
The Kind of Medical Treatment I Want or Don't Want
How Comfortable I Want to Be
How I Want People to Treat Me
What I Want My Loved Ones to Know

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the nonprofit organization that created the *Five Wishes* living will

Being a Caregiver

- Often a stressful and demanding ordeal
- Have human needs and emotions
- Must give themselves permission to be human
- Must care for themselves as well as their loved one



Caregivers Have the Right to:

- **Be angry:** Turn this energy into positive action. Clean a closet, take a walk, or talk with someone.
- **Be frustrated:** Stop what you are doing, take a deep breath, and begin a different activity.
- **Take time out:** Sit in a favorite chair in a quiet room, take a trip to the store, or spend a few hours out with friends.
- **Ask for help:** Explore family, friends, and local agencies for resource services. Many doctors' offices and clergy provide referrals.
- **Recognize your limits:** You are a valuable person. Take care of yourself, too!
- **Make mistakes:** No one is perfect, and mistakes help you learn.
- **Grieve:** It is normal to be sad over the loss of the way things used to be.
- **Laugh and love:** Now more than ever, it's important to have meaningful connections.
- **Hope:** Tomorrow, the day may go smoother, a friend may call, and new treatments may be found.

Resources – Alzheimer's Association

- The world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research
- Chapters across the nation, providing services within each community
- Professionally staffed 24/7 Helpline (1.800.272.3900) which offers information and advice to callers in more than 170 languages

Hands on Programs or Projects

- Philoptochos chapters can go on line and find the nearest Alzheimer's Association chapter and volunteer to help
- Annual walkathons to raise money and awareness
- June - Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month – Provide Handouts, Speakers, and Purple Ribbons
- Volunteer at a local Alzheimer's Association Chapter for special events, helpline support, office help, and public education and awareness programs
- Helping organizations, such the Alzheimer's Association and the Bright Focus Foundation, is critical for funding Alzheimer's research in the understanding, treatment, and cure for this disease

Alzheimer's Communication

Never argue, instead agree

Never reason, instead divert

Never shame, instead distract

Never lecture, instead reassure

Never say "remember", instead reminisce

Never say "I told you", instead repeat/regroup

Never say "You can't", instead do what they can

Never command/demand, instead ask/model

