



Alzheimer's™ Diagnosis: How to find out if a loved one is affected?

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Alzheimer's disease is a chronic [Neurodegenerative Disorder](#) that affects 5.4 million Americans. It is the most common cause of dementia among older people. Alzheimer's disease leads to a loss in memory and decline in mental faculties to an extent that the person is incapable of functioning normally. Early Symptoms of Alzheimer's may be dismissed as signs of aging making it difficult to diagnose in the early stages. It is typical of Alzheimer's that it sets in slowly and only worsens over time.

The most common risk factor for Alzheimer's is aging. About 96% of patients suffering from Alzheimer's are above the age of 65. This does not mean people below the age of 65 cannot be diagnosed. Alzheimer's in people below the age of 65 is known as Early Onset Alzheimer's, affecting approximately 200,000 Americans. It is a devastating neurodegenerative disorder that has no way to prevent, cure or even slow its progression. However, it is incurable but not untreatable. There has been an advancement in the . There are four FDA-approved medications available for treating Alzheimer's symptoms and many other clinical trials. Therefore, an early detection is important in chalking out appropriate treatment, care and future plans. If you observe symptoms of memory loss and Alzheimer's dementia and are concerned, it is advisable to get yourself or your loved one tested. While doctors can always determine whether a person is suffering from dementia, the causes of dementia could be varied. Experiencing memory loss does not mean you have Alzheimer's disease. It could be caused by any of the other causes such as depression, drug interactions, thyroid problems, excess use of alcohol or certain vitamin deficiencies. Dementia brought about by these causes is treatable and reversible.

Steps to diagnose:

A reality is that Alzheimer's disease cannot be diagnosed completely accurately until after death. A process of elimination is used by doctors which has about 90% accuracy. It includes: A study of the problems exhibited may help a physician in distinguishing Alzheimer's from another form of dementia. Once a person is diagnosed the next step is to find out an appropriate plan of action. There are initiatives led by doctors to advance Alzheimer's disease treatment. The Neurodegenerative Consortium is one such multi-institution initiative established by [MD Anderson Cancer Center](#) to advance the research for . The initiative envisions a world where Alzheimer's is no longer incurable. Its mission is to develop therapies that will slow, stop or reverse the progression of Alzheimer's.

When a friend or family member is diagnosed with Alzheimer's, show them your support. It may be a scary road but there is help out there. There is an army of researchers and doctors dedicated to finding better treatments and cure for the disease. You can join an Alzheimer's Association for friends and family members that

will not only help you cope but also be a source of guidance. If you feel overwhelmed, do not hesitate to seek the advice of a professional.

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