UNDERSTANDING ALZHEIMER’S AND DEMENTIA

An education program presented by the Alzheimer’s Association®

Participant’s Guide
Understanding Alzheimer’s and Dementia
Participant’s Guide

Introduction

Learning Objectives
- Compare Alzheimer’s and dementia.
- Recognize how Alzheimer’s disease affects the brain.
- List the risk factors of Alzheimer’s disease.
- Identify the three stages of the disease.
- Recognize current FDA-approved treatments that can address some of the symptoms of the disease.
- Describe how scientists are working to advance research.
- Name the resources available through the Alzheimer’s Association.
Impact of Alzheimer’s Disease

How many Americans are currently living with Alzheimer’s?

- 850,000
- 5.7 million
- 12 million
- 3.4 million

How many unpaid Alzheimer’s caregivers are there in the United States?

- 1.2 million
- 8.5 million
- 13 million
- 16.1 million
Alzheimer’s and Dementia

Alzheimer’s is a normal part of the aging process.  

(True)  (False)
Alzheimer’s and Dementia Recap

- Dementia is a general term for a collection of symptoms that are severe enough to interfere with daily life.
- Alzheimer’s is the most common cause of dementia.
- Alzheimer’s is not a normal part of aging; it is a progressive brain disease.
Alzheimer’s in the Brain Recap

- More than 100 years ago, Dr. Alois Alzheimer described specific changes in the brain, the formation of plaques and tangles.
- Alzheimer’s causes nerve cells to die, which leads to shrinkage in the brain.
- The brain changes result in changes in memory, thinking, and behavior.
Risk Factors

What is the greatest known risk factor for Alzheimer's disease?
- Genetics
- Family history
- Age

Dr. Heather Snyder
Alzheimer's Association
**Populations at higher risk**
- Hispanics are about 1.5 times as likely as whites to develop Alzheimer's and other dementias.
- African Americans are about twice as likely to develop the disease as whites.
- Almost two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's are women.

**Risk Factors Recap**
- Age is the greatest known risk factor for Alzheimer's. An individual's risk for developing the disease increases at age 65.
- Family history is also a known risk factor — having a parent or sibling with the disease increases an individual's risk.
- Risk genes and deterministic genes are the two types of genes associated with Alzheimer's.
- Hispanics, African Americans, and women are at an increased risk for Alzheimer's.
Stages of Alzheimer's Disease

A different kind of forgetting

Losing the words

Facing the frustration

Living for today

Dr. James Hendrix
Alzheimer's Association

Dr. Heather Snyder
Alzheimer's Association
Stages of Alzheimer’s Disease Recap

- The three stages of Alzheimer’s disease — early, middle and late — are sometimes referred to as mild, moderate and severe in a medical context.
- No two individuals experience the symptoms and progression of Alzheimer’s disease in the same way.
- While symptoms worsen over time, people progress through stages at different rates as their abilities change.
FDA-Approved Treatments for Symptoms

There are several drugs available to slow down the progression of Alzheimer's disease.

True  False

Dr. James Hendrix
Alzheimer's Association
Three types of drugs are approved by the FDA to help manage Alzheimer's symptoms:

- Cholinesterase inhibitors: Aricept (donepezil), Exelon (rivastigmine), Razadyne (galantamine)
- Glutamate modulators: Namenda (memantine)
- Combination of cholinesterase inhibitors and glutamate modulators: Namzaric (memantine + donepezil)

These treatments only address some symptoms of Alzheimer's in some people, they do not treat the underlying cause of the disease.
Advancing Alzheimer’s Research

Investigating early intervention
Exploring lifestyle factors
Moving toward a cure
Securing the funds

Hope for the Future

Clinical studies
TrialMatch®
Scientists have increased their understanding of Alzheimer's significantly over the past decade.

People living with dementia, caregivers and healthy volunteers without dementia are needed for clinical studies in order to find methods of prevention, treatment and, ultimately, a cure.

Both drug and non-drug studies are taking place across the country and online.

TrialMatch (alz.org/TrialMatch) is a free clinical studies matching service.
About the Alzheimer’s Association

Our mission:
The Alzheimer’s Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer’s care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s disease®.

800.272.3900 | alz.org®
Alzheimer's Association Key Resources

We're available wherever and whenever you need reliable information and support.

- On the phone – 24/7 Helpline, 800.272.3900
- Online – alz.org
- In communities nationwide – alz.org/CRF
Questions
Alzheimer’s Association Resources

- Call the 24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900). Care specialists and master’s-level clinicians provide reliable information and support all day, every day.
- Visit alz.org®, a robust repository of up-to-date dementia-related information and resources.
- Join ALZConnected® (alzconnected.org), our free online community, to connect with other caregivers or people living with dementia.
- Explore Alzheimer’s Association & AARP Community Resource Finder (alz.org/CRF) to locate dementia resources, programs and services in your area, including your local Association office.
- Assess your needs and create customized action plans with Alzheimer’s Navigator® (alzheimersnavigator.org).
- Check out alz.org/research to learn more about Alzheimer’s and other dementias and the Association’s involvement in advancing the field of research.
- Go to alz.org/publications to access our catalog of brochures and topic sheets covering a variety of dementia-related topics.

For people living with dementia:

- Visit alz.org/IHaveAlz to start learning and planning in order to live your best life today.
- Access LiveWell Online Resources (alz.org/livewell) for free interactive tools and personalized steps for living well with the disease.
- Take our free Living with Alzheimer’s: For People with Alzheimer’s workshop online at alz.org/education or through your local Alzheimer’s Association office (alz.org/CRF).

For caregivers:

- Find support and information for all stages of the disease at alz.org/care.
- Visit the alz.org/safety for a comprehensive offering of safety information, tips and resources.
- Take our free Living with Alzheimer’s: For Caregivers workshop series online at alz.org/education or through your local Alzheimer’s Association office (alz.org/CRF).

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