Alzheimer’s Disease: A Progressive Brain Disorder that Impacts Thinking and Memory

Dementia

Dementia is a term used to describe a range of symptoms associated with cognitive impairment severe enough to interfere with daily life. It is caused by brain damage that affects their ability to communicate, which in turn negatively impacts:

THINKING
BEHAVIOR
MEMORY
FEELINGS

There are many types of dementia, including one of the most common forms, Alzheimer’s disease, in addition to dementia with Lewy bodies, vascular dementia, and frontotemporal dementia.1

Alzheimer’s disease: A type of dementia

Alzheimer’s disease is a progressive, degenerative brain disorder that deteriorates brain cells over time. Symptoms often begin in the early 60s in a relatively small number of people and progress to a degree of cognitive decline and behavior change.2 About 7 million people in the United States have Alzheimer’s,3 and it is the 6th leading cause of death in the U.S.4

Age is the greatest risk factor for developing Alzheimer’s disease; however, it is not a normal part of aging.

ESTIMATED DEMENTIA GLOBAL PREVALENCE

IMPACT & SYMPTOMS

Global prevalence from theWHO2019 Alzheimer’s Disease Report5

- WHO estimates 24 million people will have Alzheimer’s in 2050, up from 5 million in 2000.

- That’s 1 person out of 60 in the world who has dementia, and 1 in 100 who has Alzheimer’s disease.

- There are 44 million people living with dementia worldwide.

Alzheimer’s disease affects 20% of people aged 75 and older, and 60% of people aged 85 or above.6

Symptoms include:

- Memory problems
- Problems with thinking and reasoning
- Problems with mobility
- Changes in personality
- Communication difficulties
- Depression and anxiety

PATHOLOGY OF ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

(1) plaque and neurofibrillary tangles (2) microglia

Dementia versus Alzheimer’s disease

Behavioral and psychological symptoms (BPS) are commonly associated with dementia.7

- A frontal subcortical system disorder
- Pseudobulbar affect
- Depression
- Agitation
- Anxiety
- Problems with eating

DETECTION & TREATMENT

A number of tests are used to determine whether a person has Alzheimer’s disease or other conditions that could be mistaken for Alzheimer’s.8

- A complete medical and mental health history includes a medication review.

- Laboratory tests
- Blood tests
- Imaging tests

- Treatment for Alzheimer’s disease
- Drugs that slow the disease’s progress
- Non-drug treatments

- Support and care management
- Assistance with daily activities
- Caregiver support

Today, helping people with Alzheimer’s disease and their families is at the forefront of innovative work aimed at the goal of advancing innovations around Alzheimer’s disease.
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References


