

Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness



It's fairly common to forget something simple, such as where you put your car keys. But imagine if you began to forget more important things, such as which street you live on, or the names of your children. As we age, we are at risk for memory problems and dementia.

Alzheimer's is a form of dementia that gets worse over time and causes memory loss, difficulty with language, impaired judgment and personality changes. Not everyone gets Alzheimer's disease; however, memory does become less efficient in everyone as they age. Although there is no cure, knowledge of prevention methods and treatment plans can help patients and families better manage Alzheimer's and memory loss.



IS IT NORMAL MEMORY LOSS OR SOMETHING MORE?

If you are experiencing memory loss, it may not be a simple case of being forgetful. Normal age-related memory loss may include forgetting things now and then, and perhaps even recalling the fact later. However, if the information cannot be remembered at all, even with helpful clues, it's time to talk to your doctor.

Symptoms of Alzheimer's range and early signs can include:

- Significant memory loss
- Difficulty completing simple tasks such as counting money
- Confusion about dates and times
- Becoming lost easily
- Visual difficulty such as the inability to judge distances
- Trouble speaking and writing
- Misplacing things on a regular basis
- Poor judgment and decision making
- Mood swings and personality changes

BOOST YOUR MEMORY

A healthy brain is essential to your quality of life because it controls all your thoughts, behavior and movement. You can help keep your brain healthy and maintain your memory, or even compensate for memory problems, by engaging in physical and mental activity.



Build your brainpower and boost your memory by using these tips:

- Make lists to provide structure to your life
- Keep a schedule with reminders
- Exercise regularly to increase blood flow to the brain
- Continue to read and learn to build new thoughts
- Eat Omega-3 fatty acids (found in fish)
- Make plans to socialize with others to help stay alert and increase happiness
- Meditate to reduce unhealthy stress
- Visualize a new situation or write about a fictional situation
- Try something new such as a game or activity
- Paint or work on another craft project you enjoy

Early diagnosis is key — knowledge about warning signs, prevention and treatments can help your quality of life

There is no cure for Alzheimer's or dementia; however, some symptoms can be delayed or improved with medication. Talk to your doctor if you start experiencing the symptoms mentioned in this blog. Early diagnosis is key — knowledge about warning signs, prevention and treatments can help your quality of life.

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Balance, HCR ManorCare's comprehensive health and wellness blog, supplies readers with healthy ideas throughout the year. The blog is designed to serve as a resource, not only for patients, residents and families, but for anyone who strives to live a healthy, "balanced" life. For more information and help in making healthy choices, go to balance.hcr-manorcare.com and sign up to receive our newsletters. If you need help making a health care decision, visit our care finder and live chat.