

Welcome!

The University of Denver and  
Dementia Friendly Denver Present

Reducing Your Risk for  
Alzheimer's and Dementia

# Program

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**DU Knoebel Institute for Healthy Aging**

**DU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute**

**Dementia Friendly Denver**

**Seniors' Resource Center**

**Alzheimer's Association - 800.272.3900**

# Dementia Facts and Resources

**Presenter – JJ Jordan**

**Community Chair**

**Dementia Friendly Denver**

**[dementiafriendlydenver.org](http://dementiafriendlydenver.org)**

# Dementia Facts and Resources

**Serious Subject – Great Reasons for  
Optimism and Hope!**

# Dementia Facts

## Typical Non-Dementia Age Related Changes

**Making a bad decision once in a while**

**Missing an occasional monthly payment**

**Temporarily forgetting which day it is**

**Sometimes forgetting which word to use**

**Losing things from time to time**

# Dementia Facts

## What is Dementia?

Dementia is a loss of cognitive functioning serious enough to affect a person's ability to perform everyday activities.

### It affects:

Memory

Thought

Behavior

Planning

Language

Navigation

Personality/Mood

Organization

What is the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia?



# Dementia Facts

**Dementia is an umbrella term**

**Common types of dementia:**

**Alzheimer's Disease**

**Vascular Dementia**

**Dementia with Lewy Bodies**

**Frontotemporal Dementia**

**Parkinson's Related Dementia**

**Mixed Dementia**





# Dementia Facts

## A Word About Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI)

Severe enough to show up on tests

Not severe enough to affect daily life

Increases risk but does not ensure dementia

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Dementia Facts

## What is Alzheimer's disease?

### Alzheimer's disease:

- Is a brain disorder
- Is a progressive disease
- Is the most common form of dementia
- Has no cure
- Is eventually fatal
- Protein plaques and tangles cause impairment

# Dementia Facts

## What is Vascular dementia?

### Vascular dementia:

- Initial symptoms are impaired judgment, decision making and planning
- Occurs from blood vessel blockages or damage from strokes
- Location, number and size of brain damage determines impairment

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Dementia Facts

## What is dementia with Lewy Bodies? (DLB)

### Dementia with Lewy Bodies:

- Symptoms include memory loss and cognitive problems
- Also sleep disturbances, visual hallucinations, and gait imbalance
- Clumps of protein can develop in the cortex causing dementia

# Dementia Facts

## What is Frontotemporal dementia? (FTD)

### Frontotemporal dementia:

- Symptoms include changes in personality and behavior and difficulties with language
- Symptoms generally develop at a younger age
- Survival is fewer years than Alzheimer's

# Dementia Facts

## What is Parkinson's related dementia?

### Parkinson's related dementia:

- Often results in progressive dementia similar to Lewy Body or Alzheimer's
- Problems with movement are common
- Clumps of protein cause degeneration of nerve cells



# Dementia Facts

## What is Mixed dementia?

### Mixed dementia:

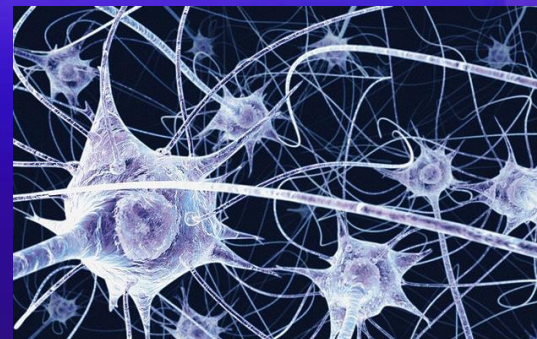
- More common than previously thought
- Happens when more than one cause of dementia occur simultaneously in the brain



# Dementia Facts

## How the Brain Works

- There are 100 billion nerve cells, or neurons creating a branching network
- Signals traveling through the neuron forest form memories, thoughts and feelings
- Dementia destroys neurons



Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Dementia Facts

## Dementia Statistics

- 10,000 Baby Boomers turn 65 every day in the US
- 1 in 10 will develop dementia past the age of 65
- Approximately 40% will have dementia at age 85
- 5.5 millions Americans are affected by Alzheimer's disease
- Someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's every 66 seconds in the US
- Alzheimer's is the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death
- Alzheimer's is the most expensive disease in the US
- \$259 billion is spent annually caring for those with dementia

# Dementia Facts

## Major Risk Factors

- **Age is the primary risk factor for the most common forms of dementia**
- **Incidence is higher in women due to life expectancy**
- **Family history can increase risk in some forms of dementia**

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Dementia Resources

**Alzheimer's Association**

**24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900**

**[alz.org/co](http://alz.org/co)**

**Vascular Dementia**

**800.787.6537**

**[stroke.colorado.org/](http://stroke.colorado.org/)**

**Frontotemporal Dementia**

**Helpline 866.507.7722**

**[theaftd.org](http://theaftd.org)**

**Lewy Body Dementia**

**800.539.9767**

**[lbda.org](http://lbda.org)**

**Parkinson's Related Dementia**

**Helpline 303.681.1810**

**[parkinsonrockies.org](http://parkinsonrockies.org)**

# Dementia Warning Signs

**Presenter – JJ Jordan**

**Community Chair**

**Dementia Friendly Denver**

**[dementiafriendlydenver.org](http://dementiafriendlydenver.org)**

# Dementia Warning Signs

## 1. Memory Changes That Disrupt Daily Life

- Forgetting something recently learned
- Asking the same question over and over
- New reliance on memory aids



# Dementia Warning Signs

## 2. Challenges in Planning or Solving Problems

- Problems developing or following a plan
- Problems working with numbers
- Problems following a familiar recipe
- Difficulty keeping track of bills
- Challenges with concentration
- Taking longer to complete familiar tasks



# Dementia Warning Signs

## 3. Difficulty Completing Familiar Tasks

- Difficulty completing daily activities
- Trouble driving to familiar places
- Problems managing tasks at work
- Difficulty remembering rules of a favorite game

# Dementia Warning Signs

## 4. Confusion with Time or Place

- Losing track of dates, seasons or passage of time
- Forgetting where you are or how you got there

# Dementia Warning Signs

## 5. Trouble Understanding Visual Images

- Diminished ability to track visual surroundings
- Difficulty reading
- Trouble judging distance
- Problems determining color or contrast

# Dementia Warning Signs

## 6. Problems with Words in Speaking or Writing

- Problems joining or following a conversation
- Difficulty tracking conversations

Stopping in the middle unable to continue

Repeating what has already been said

- Trouble with vocabulary

Difficulty finding the right word

Calling things the wrong name

# Dementia Warning Signs

## 7. Misplacing Things and Losing Ability to Retrace Steps

- Putting things in unusual places
- Difficulty retracing steps to locate items
- Accusing others of stealing

# Dementia Warning Signs

## 8. Decreased or Poor Judgment

- Changes in decision making
- Poor judgment with money
- Giving large amounts to telemarketers
- Spending impulsively
- Wearing inappropriate clothing for the season



# Dementia Warning Signs

## 9. Withdrawal from Work or Social Activities

- **Withdrawing from:**

Hobbies, social activities, work tasks, family gatherings

- **Losing track of a favorite sports team**
- **Forgetting how to engage in a favorite hobby**
- **Avoiding social situations**



# Dementia Warning Signs

## 10. Changes in Mood or Personality

- Increased signs of:

Confusion

Suspicion

Fear

Anxiety

Agitation

# Getting a Diagnosis

**Presenter – Tina Wells**

**Director of Regional Programs**

**Alzheimer's Association of Colorado**

**[twells@alz.org](mailto:twells@alz.org)**

# Getting A Diagnosis

## Why You Want to Know

- It might not be dementia!
- Some treatable conditions mimic dementia symptoms
- Detection of serious health problems other than dementia
- Physicians can check for medication conflicts

# Getting A Diagnosis

## Selecting a Doctor

- Only 50% of people with dementia have a formal diagnosis
- Doctors can now diagnose dementia with accuracy
- Start with a doctor who is experienced in diagnosing Alzheimer's and other dementias:
  - Geriatricians
  - Neurologists
  - Psychiatrists
  - Neuropsychologists
- Physician resource list can be obtained from the Alzheimer's Association Helpline 800.272.3900

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Getting A Diagnosis

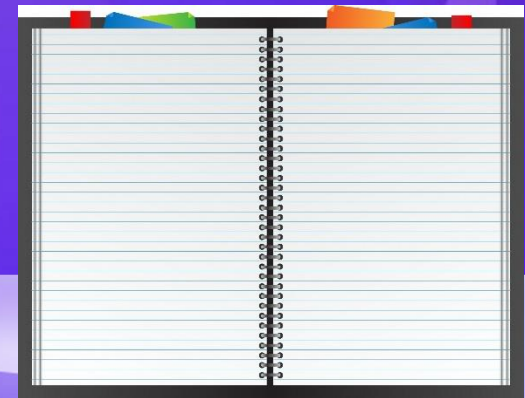
## Preparing for the Doctor's Visit

- Keep a log

  - Make a list of specific symptoms

  - Include when, where and frequency

  - Get input from family members



- List current and previous health issues

- Bring all medications (prescriptions, vitamins, herbal supplements and over the counter medications)

# Getting A Diagnosis

## Steps in the Assessment

- Medical history
- Mental status evaluation
- Cognitive testing
- Physical exam
  - Blood pressure and pulse
  - Sensation and balance
  - Brain scan for stroke determination
  - Lab tests to rule out other disorders
- Psychiatric evaluation
- Interviews with family members





# Getting A Diagnosis

## Diagnosis Emotions

- Shock
- Relief
- Confusion
- Denial
- Fear
- Grief
- Worry
- Guilt
- Anger
- Acceptance





# Getting A Diagnosis

## Early Diagnosis Can...

- Maximize benefits from available treatments
- Explore treatments to relieve symptoms
- Early treatment may help people remain independent longer
- Offer opportunities to participate in clinical trials

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Getting A Diagnosis

The Sooner You Know, You Can....

- Participate in arranging your own care
- Consider future living arrangements
- Discuss financial and legal matters
- Consider safety and transportation issues
- Be empowered to make decisions
- Build the right care team and social network



# Communication Tips

**Presenter – Tia Saucedo**  
**Director, Adult Day and Respite**  
**Seniors' Resource Center**

**[tsauceda@srcaging.org](mailto:tsauceda@srcaging.org)**

# Communication Tips

## When Interacting with Those with Dementia...

- Use short sentences and basic words
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Limit distractions

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Communication Tips

## When Interacting with Those with Dementia...

- Avoid questions, rephrase in statements instead
- If necessary, ask one question at a time
- Allow plenty of time for answers

# Communication Tips

## When Interacting with Those with Dementia...

- Focus on feelings vs facts
- Avoid criticizing, correcting or arguing
- Go with the flow unless safety is at risk



# Communication Tips

## When Interacting with Those with Dementia...

- Leave plenty of time for conversations
- Pay attention to your tone
- Answer repetitive questions cheerfully

# Communication Tips

## When Interacting with Those with Dementia...

- If upsets occur, redirect the person to a pleasant activity
- Discontinue a difficult conversation and try again later
- Less is more; sometimes quiet can lessen confusion

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Communication Tips

## Use the SMILE Acronym!

- Slow down
- Minimize Choices
- Instill Calm
- Look and Listen
- Engage



# Communication Tips

**Patience is the Key!!**



# Dementia Risk Reduction

**Presenter – JJ Jordan  
Community Chair  
Dementia Friendly Denver**

**[dementiafriendlydenver.org](http://dementiafriendlydenver.org)**

# Dementia Risk Reduction

Ten Things You Can Do Starting Today

## BREAK A SWEAT!

Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates heart rate and increases blood flow.

Always check with your doctor before starting an exercise program!

Source – Alzheimer's Association



# Dementia Risk Reduction

Ten Things You Can Do Starting Today

## **FOLLOW YOUR HEART!**

**Risk factors for cardiovascular disease, stroke, obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes negatively impact your cognitive health.**

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Dementia Risk Reduction

Ten Things You Can Do Starting Today

## FUEL UP RIGHT!

**Eat a balanced diet that is high in vegetables and fruits to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline. If it's good for your heart, it's good for your brain.**

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Dementia Risk Reduction

Ten Things You Can Do Starting Today

**BUTT OUT!**

Smoking increases risk of cognitive decline.

Source – Alzheimer's Association

# Dementia Risk Reduction

Ten Things You Can Do Starting Today

**TAKE CARE OF YOUR  
MENTAL HEALTH!**

Some studies link depression with cognitive decline so seek treatment if you have depression, anxiety or stress.

Source – Alzheimer's Association