

Livewell™ with the Facts

Personalised
Dementia
Care

What is Dementia ?

Dementia is not a specific disease. It's an overall term that describes a group of symptoms associated with a decline in memory or other thinking skills, severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities. Alzheimer's disease accounts for 60 to 80 percent of cases.

Vascular dementia, which occurs after a stroke, is the second most common dementia type. But there are, however, many other conditions that can cause symptoms of dementia, including some that are reversible, such as thyroid problems and vitamin deficiencies.

Dementia is often incorrectly referred to as "senility" or "senile dementia," which reflects the formerly widespread but incorrect belief that serious mental decline is a normal part of aging.

Planning for the future

Do you know who you would want to make decisions for you in the event you're no longer able to?

- An earlier diagnosis allows you to be open with your family and support network about what you want during each stage of the disease. This can give you peace of mind, reduce the burden on family members and prevent disagreements.
- Planning ahead allows you to express your wishes about legal, financial and end-of-life decisions. You and your family will be able to review and update legal documents, discuss finances and property, and identify your care preferences.
- You can also address potential safety issues, such as driving or wandering, ahead of time.

10 Early Symptoms of Dementia

1. Memory loss that disrupts daily life.
2. Challenges in planning or solving problems.
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure.
4. Confusion with time or place.
5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.
6. New problems with words in speaking or writing.
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps.
8. Decreased or poor judgment.
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities.
10. Changes in mood and personality.

If you notice any of the 10 warning signs in yourself or someone you know, schedule an appointment with your doctor. An early diagnosis of dementia provides a range of benefits for the individuals who are diagnosed, as well as for their loved ones.

Livewell with the Stats

**Dementia affects
1 in 20 people
over the age of 65.**

**Dementia affects
1 in 5 people over
the age of 80.**

**Did you know every
3 seconds someone is
diagnosed with
dementia globally?**

**Worldwide, there are
an estimated 47.5 million people
with dementia (2015 Stats).
By 2050 the number
is expected to rise to
over 130 million.**

**By 2050, there will be
more adults over 60, worldwide,
than children under 14.**

Livewell with Knowledge

Myth

Memory loss is a natural part of aging.

Only older people can get dementia.

Drinking out of aluminium cans or cooking in aluminium pots and pans can lead to dementia.

Silver dental fillings increase the risk of dementia.

There are treatments available to stop the progression of dementia.

Dementia is only a Western issue.

Reality

As people age, it's normal to have occasional memory problems, such as forgetting the name of a person you've recently met. However, dementia is more than occasional memory loss. It's a disease that causes brain cells to malfunction and ultimately die. When this happens, an individual may forget the name of a longtime friend or which roads to take to return to a home they've lived in for decades.

Dementia can strike people in their 30s, 40s and even 50s. This is called younger-onset dementia (also referred to as early onset). It is estimated that there are more than 5 million people living with Alzheimer's disease in the United States. This includes the over 5 million people age 65 and older, and 200,000 people younger than age 65 with younger-onset dementia.

During the 1960s and 1970s, aluminium emerged as a possible suspect in dementia. This suspicion led to concern about exposure to aluminium through everyday sources such as pots and pans, beverage cans, antacids and antiperspirants. Since then, studies have failed to confirm any role for aluminium in causing dementia. Experts today focus on other areas of research, and few believe that everyday sources of aluminium pose any threat.

According to the best available scientific evidence, there is no relationship between silver dental fillings and dementia. The concern that there could be a link arose because "silver" fillings are made of an amalgam (mixture) that typically contains about 50 percent mercury, 35 percent silver and 15 percent tin. Mercury is a heavy metal that, in certain forms, is known to be toxic to the brain and other organs.

At this time, there is no treatment to cure, delay or stop the progression of dementia. While some treatments can help people to live with their symptoms a little better, there are no treatments that slow or stop dementia. This means that the diseases will continue to get worse over time unless new treatments can be found quickly.

Dementia is a global issue. It's a common myth that dementia is only an issue in the Western world. The largest increases in dementia expected over the next 20 years are actually in places like China, India and Sub-Saharan Africa. Dementia is a truly global health issue, affecting 46.8 million people worldwide.

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