

## Alzheimer's disease



### What is Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive form of dementia. Dementia is a broader term for conditions caused by brain injury or diseases that negatively affect memory, thinking, and behavior. These changes interfere with daily life.

There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, but there are treatments that can slow the progression of the disease.

### Facts you need to know

Although many people have heard of Alzheimer's disease, some are not sure what exactly it is. Here are some facts about this case:

- Alzheimer's disease is a persistent chronic condition.
- Symptoms appear gradually, which means that they cause a slow decline.
- There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, but treatment can help slow the progression of the disease and may improve quality of life.
- Anyone can get Alzheimer's disease, but some people are more likely to get it. This includes people over 65 who have a family history of the condition.
- Alzheimer's disease and dementia are not the same thing. Alzheimer's disease is a type of dementia.
- There is no single outcome expected for people with Alzheimer's disease. Some people live a long time with mild cognitive impairment, while others experience faster onset of symptoms and faster disease progression.



## **Alzheimer's disease causes and risk factors**

Experts haven't identified a single cause of Alzheimer's disease but have identified some risk factors, including:

- age. Most people with Alzheimer's disease are 65 years of age or older.
- Family history. If you have an immediate family member who has had this condition, you are more likely to develop it.
- Genetics. Certain genes have been linked to Alzheimer's disease.

Having one or more of these risk factors does not mean that you will develop Alzheimer's disease. It simply raises your risk level.

## **What are the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease?**

Everyone experiences bouts of forgetfulness now and then. But people with Alzheimer's disease display certain persistent behaviors and symptoms that get worse over time. It can include:

- Memory loss that affects daily activities, such as the ability to keep appointments
- Trouble with familiar tasks
- Difficulties in solving problems
- Trouble speaking or writing
- Confusion about times or places
- Poor personal hygiene
- Mood and personality change
- Withdrawing from friends, family and community

Symptoms change according to the stage of the disease.





## **Alzheimer's disease stages**

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disease, which means that symptoms will get worse over time.

Alzheimer's disease is divided into seven stages:

- The first stage. There are no symptoms at this stage but there may be an early diagnosis based on family history.
- The second stage. Early symptoms, such as forgetfulness, appear.
- third stage. Mild physical and mental impairments, such as poor memory and concentration, appear. It may only be noticed by someone who is very close to the person.
- The fourth stage. Alzheimer's disease is often diagnosed at this stage, but it is still considered mild. Memory loss and inability to perform daily tasks is evident.
- fifth stage. Moderate to severe symptoms require help from loved ones or caregivers.
- Sixth stage. At this point, a person with Alzheimer's disease may need help with basic tasks, such as eating and getting dressed.
- Seventh stage. This is the most severe and final stage of Alzheimer's disease. There may be loss of speech and facial expressions.

As a person progresses through these stages, they will need increased support from the doctor.

## **How is Alzheimer's disease diagnosed?**

The only definitive way to diagnose someone with Alzheimer's disease is to examine their brain tissue after death. But your doctor can use other examinations and tests to assess your mental abilities, diagnose dementia and rule out other conditions.

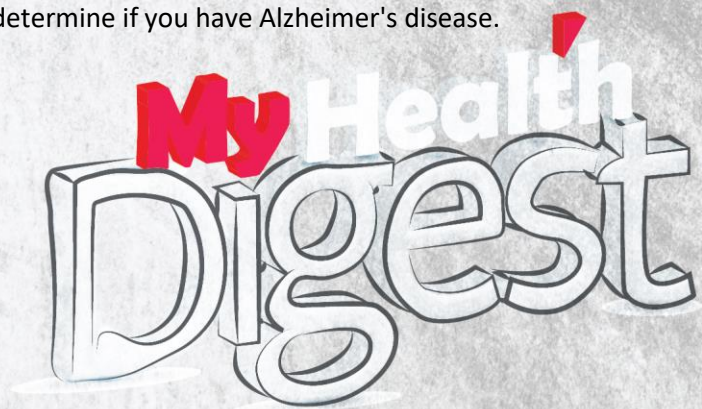
They will likely start by taking a medical history. They may ask about:

- symptoms
- Family medical history

Other current or previous health conditions

- Current or previous medications
- Diet, alcohol intake, or other lifestyle habits

From there, your doctor will likely run several tests to help determine if you have Alzheimer's disease.





## **Alzheimer's disease tests**

Your doctor may also order brain imaging studies. These studies may include:

- Magnetic resonance imaging. An MRI can help pick up key signs, such as inflammation, bleeding and structural problems.
- Computed tomography (CT). CT scans take X-rays that can help your doctor look for abnormal features in your brain.
- Positron emission tomography (PET). PET scans can help your doctor detect plaque buildup. Plaque is a protein linked to Alzheimer's disease symptoms.

Other tests your doctor may perform include blood tests to check for genes that may indicate an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease.

## **Alzheimer's medication**

There is no known cure for Alzheimer's disease. However, your doctor can recommend medications and other treatments to help relieve symptoms and delay disease progression.

Your doctor may also recommend antidepressants, anti-anxiety medications, or antipsychotics to help treat symptoms associated with Alzheimer's disease. These symptoms include:

- depression
- Insomnia

Aggression

- rampage
- hallucinations

## **Other Alzheimer's treatments**

In addition to medications, lifestyle changes may help you manage your condition. for example:

- Focus on tasks
- Reduce confusion
- Avoid confrontation
- Get enough rest every day
- Stay calm





### **Alzheimer's disease prevention**

Researchers focus on healthy lifestyle habits in general as ways to prevent cognitive decline. The following measures may help:

- Quit Smoking.
- Exercise regularly.
- Try cognitive training exercises.
- Eat a vegetarian diet.
- Eat more antioxidants.
- Maintain an active social life.

Be sure to speak with your doctor before making any major changes to your lifestyle.

