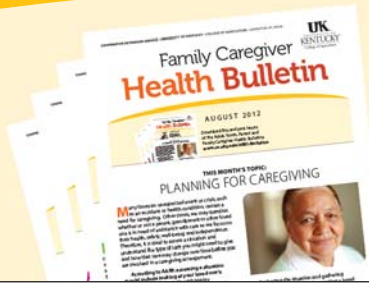


Family Caregiver Health Bulletin



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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Whether you are a caregiver or someone who has concerns about memory loss, knowing the risk factors for dementia can help you make lifestyle changes that can benefit the health of your brain. Early diagnosis can also help you seek proper treatment and plan for the future, including decisions about caregiving, living arrangements, transportation, safety, financial and legal matters. Early diagnosis also allows those living with the disease to be an active member of the caregiving team and support network.

While age is the single biggest risk factor for developing dementia, there are other issues that factor into the risk for dementia, such as family history, certain genes, head trauma, heart health, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

According the Alzheimer's Association, 10 warning signs of Alzheimer's disease include:

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Healthy aging can keep your body and brain fit and help prevent the development of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.



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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 and 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 social activities
10. Changes in mood and personality

What should you do if you see these signs in yourself or someone else?

- **Talk about it.** Be gentle but straightforward about what you are seeing and thinking.
- **Encourage someone with symptoms to visit a health care professional** so that they can be properly assessed and diagnosed. Some signs can be treated or reversed. It may not even be dementia, but another illness or problem that needs proper treatment.

- **Learn about Alzheimer's disease and the different types of dementia.** Understand the importance and benefits of early detection and treatments to lead to a more productive lifestyle. Early detection can also help you plan for the future.

While medication can help improve or slow down memory loss and relieve some symptoms, there is no stopping the progression of Alzheimer's disease. It is therefore important to stay healthy throughout your lifespan. In general, overall healthy aging can keep not only your body, but your brain fit and can help prevent the development of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. To stay healthy, it is important to keep your weight down, exercise both your body and mind, avoid drugs and excess use of alcohol and tobacco, stay socially connected in meaningful ways and eat nutritiously.

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RESOURCE:

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