



HEALTH INFORMATION

Carers Guide to Alzheimer's

What is Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, affecting around 417,000 people in the UK.

Dementia affects all types of people although it is more common amongst older people. It is a physical disease affecting the brain. During the course of the disease, 'plaques' and 'tangles' develop in the structure of the brain, leading to the death of brain cells. People with Alzheimer's also have a shortage of some important chemicals in their brains. These chemicals are involved with the transmission of messages within the brain.

Alzheimer's is a progressive disease, which means that gradually, more parts of the brain are damaged. As this happens, the symptoms become more severe and they will need help with everyday activities.

Is there a cure?

Currently there is no cure for this disease. There are drugs available for people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease which slow down the progression of symptoms.

Carers tips

- Maintain a routine and simplify everyday tasks
- Help to support their independence and help maintain their dignity
- Ensure 'safety' is a priority
- Encourage health and fitness making the most of the person's abilities
- Use memory aids and avoid confrontation
- Keep communicating with them and maintain your sense of humour

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's can be demanding so don't forget to look after yourself. Make sure you take regular breaks and do not isolate yourself from friends and family.

Be sure to seek help and support which can include advice and information, financial assistance and emotional help.

Make use of your local GP and contact your Local Authority to make sure you are getting all the help that you are entitled to.

Symptoms

People with Alzheimer's disease may:

- Become confused
- Frequently forget the names of people, places, appointments and recent events
- Experience mood swings
- Feel sad, angry or feel scared and frustrated by their increasing memory loss

For more information

www.alzheimers.org.uk

www.carersuk.org

www.direct.gov.uk/disability-money

www.medigold-health.com

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