

ACTION NEWS



Interested in learning more about ACT on Alzheimer's Lakes Area?

**Contact
Miriam Aaland
651.466.1705
M-F**

***TOGETHER WE
DO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE!!***



Lakes Area

Earlier Diagnosis

What if we could diagnose Alzheimer's disease before symptoms started? The hope is, future treatments could then target the disease in its earliest stages, before irreversible brain damage or mental decline has occurred. Research on new strategies for earlier diagnosis is among the most active areas in Alzheimer's science, and funding from the Alzheimer's Association has spurred significant advances and steady progress.

Biomarkers for earlier detection

Current diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease relies largely on documenting mental decline, at which point, Alzheimer's has already caused severe brain damage. Researchers hope to discover an easy and accurate way to detect Alzheimer's before these devastating symptoms begin.

Experts believe that biomarkers (short for "biological markers") offer one of the most promising paths. A biomarker is something that can be measured to accurately and reliably indicate the presence of disease, such as fasting blood glucose (blood sugar) level, which indicates the presence of diabetes if it is 126 mg/dL or higher.

Several potential biomarkers are being studied for their ability to indicate early stages of Alzheimer's disease. Examples being studied include beta-amyloid and tau levels in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) and brain changes detectable by imaging. Recent research suggests that these indicators may change at different stages of the disease process.

Before a biomarker can be used in medical clinics, it must be validated, in which multiple studies in large and diverse groups of people establish that it accurately and reliably indicates the presence of disease. Furthermore, the laboratory methods used to measure the biomarker must be shown to be stable and reliable.

Currently, there are some FDA-approved tools that, when applicable, can be used to aid in diagnosis of people with symptoms of Alzheimer's or another dementia (e.g., brain imaging). Some of these tools have a wealth of research and clinical data to support their use in the clinic (e.g., biomarkers in CSF), while other emerging biomarkers are promising but still under investigation (e.g., blood tests and genetic risk profiling).

Reprinted from Alzheimer's Association Website

GUILT THE WASTED EMOTION

Written by Jules Benson

The Oxford Languages definition is Guilt: The fact of having committed a specified or implied offense or crime.

Merriam-Webster says the meaning of Guilt is: The feelings of deserving blame especially for imagined offenses or from a sense of inadequacy: SELF REPROACH!!

In the case of caregivers, Merriam-Webster is closer to what a caregiver feels. Many times, when you are caring for a loved one with dementia, you end your day feeling guilty, feeling inadequate, feeling impotent. I need to do more, I should have done more, I cannot do enough.

The reality is the person you are caring for, no matter how you try or how hard you work, you will never be able to stop the disease or reverse the damage that is done. As difficult as that is to accept, the sooner you understand and accept these facts, the sooner you will be able to enjoy your loved one, create memories to cherish, and joy to be savored.

The solution sounds so easy, just accept the situation, accept that your loved one is slipping away, your loved one will never be the same again. Oh man, sounds totally depressing!! Well, there are a few steps in this!

- Try really listening to your loved one. That person is still there, they are just camouflaged by the disease. You may be surprised by what you learn about your loved one.
- Instead of a goal of a perfect day, maybe work toward bringing comfort to your loved one. Count the times your loved one was peaceful, content, satisfied.
- Did they ~ and you ~ get nutrition, were clean, and safe?

So the next time you get to the end of your day, and you keep going over the things you didn't get to, consider all the things you did do! Allowing guilt to enter into the equation will do nothing for you. Guilt as an emotion will just hold you into place. If you continue to encourage its growth, you will find yourself stuck unable to go forward and just continually looking backwards. Leave guilt on the side of the road and walk away. Every day is a new beginning and a new chance to help your loved one, and yourself, feel content, satisfied, and peaceful.

This journey is not an easy one, but approached with an open mind, an eagerness for new actions, the strength to ask for help, the right attitude, and NO GUILT, the road could be a better adventure than expected!

Accepting the disease and learning to live with it is the key!



Lakes Area

**TOGETHER WE
DO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE!!**

Check us Out!
actonalzakesarea.org

facebook

ASKING FOR HELP!

Once you've been given a dementia diagnosis you and your family must, must, must, educate yourselves! Talk to your health care professionals, google verified websites, read as much as you can find to learn about

your type of dementia. The more prepared you are, the more information you have, the easier it is for you to make a plan and make decisions about your future and what you want it to look like. With dementia there isn't a lot of

room for pride ~ you need to learn to ask for help!! Setting up your support system as soon as possible and communicating with them on a regular basis will make things much easier and hopefully avoid a crisis situation.



IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS WHEN CARING FOR YOUR LOVED ONE

A person with dementia may find it increasingly difficult to communicate clearly. They may have difficulty trying to recall certain words, forget parts of a conversation, or become agitated and confused.

A person can adapt their way they communicate with their parent to reassure them and help them feel involved and understood.

Some key skills to focus on when communicating with a parent with dementia include ~

- ◇ **Conveying a positive mood during interactions:** A person can express this through facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language.
- ◇ **Minimizing distractions:** A family caregiver may wish to limit background noise such as television or radio, and sit at eye level while maintaining eye contact with your parent.
- ◇ **Speaking calmly and clearly:** A person can make conversation easier for their parent to follow by using words that are easy to understand, speaking slowly and ensuring their voice is not too loud or high pitched.
- ◇ **Distracting and redirecting:** If their parent is becoming agitated and overwhelmed by a conversation, a person can redirect their attention to another activity or topic.
- ◇ **Reminding them of fond memories:** Someone with dementia may have difficulty remembering the beginning of a conversation but they can remember fond memories from the past. Conversations around these memories can cheer them up and help them feel more in control.
- ◇ **Using a sense of humor:** A family caregiver can use humor to lighten the tone and give their parent the opportunity to laugh along with them.

Reprinted from the Medical News Today updated 9/23/2023

Watch your body language and facial expressions. All those non-verbal cues will register with someone who has dementia

ACT on
Alzheimer's
Lakes Area

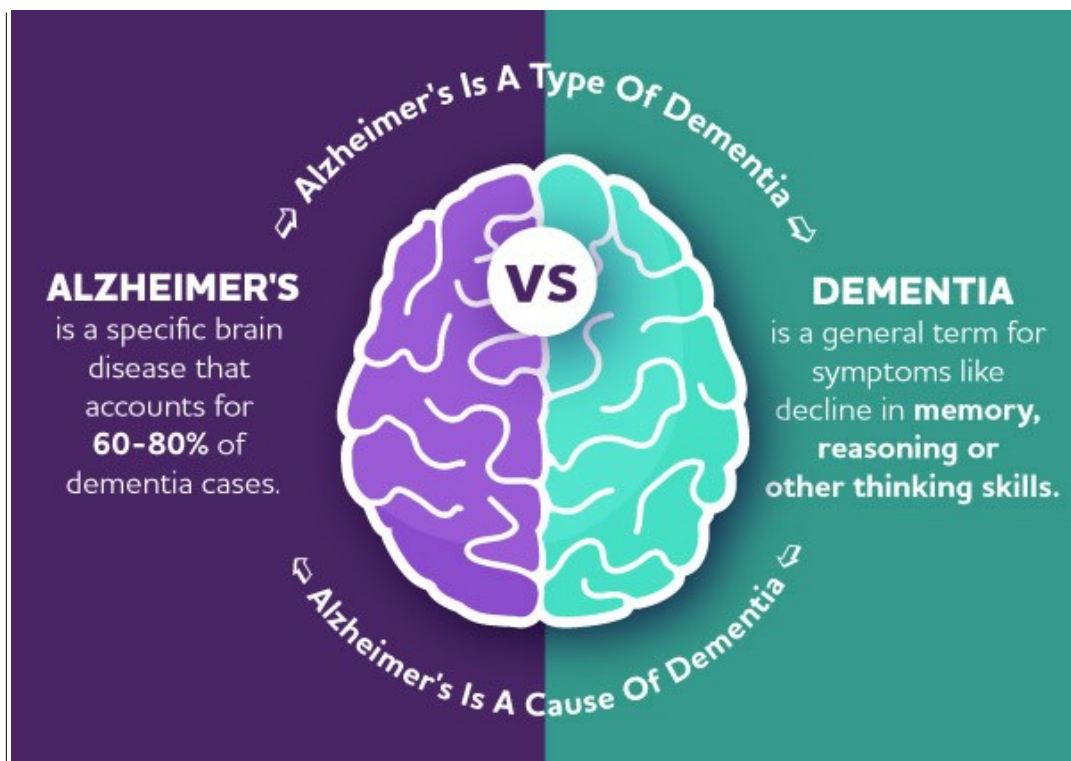
231 W Broadway Avenue
Forest Lake, MN 55025

Contact us for
information on
Dementia ~

- ⇒ Resources
- ⇒ Caregiver Support
- ⇒ Information
- ⇒ Connections
- ⇒ Education



Lakes Area



Key facts

- Currently more than 55 million people have dementia worldwide, over 60% of whom live in low-and middle-income countries. Every year, there are nearly 10 million new cases.
- Dementia results from a variety of diseases and injuries that affect the brain. Alzheimer disease is the most common form of dementia and may contribute to 60-70% of cases.
- Dementia is currently the seventh leading cause of death and one of the major causes of disability and dependency among older people globally.
- In 2019, dementia cost economies globally 1.3 trillion US dollars, approximately 50% of these costs are attributable to care provided by informal carers (e.g. family members and close friends), who provide on average 5 hours of care and supervision per day.
- Women are disproportionately affected by dementia, both directly and indirectly. Women experience higher disability-adjusted life years and mortality due to dementia, but also provide 70% of care hours for people living with dementia.

Reprinted from the World Health Organization 3/15/2023