

## The importance of early detection

Why is an early Alzheimer's diagnosis important?

Receiving a formal diagnosis early in the disease progression enables the best medical care and health outcomes for people with the disease. Even without a way to cure or slow the progression of Alzheimer's, early diagnosis provides individuals and their caregivers with access to available treatments, support services, and the opportunity to enroll in clinical trials.

An individual's medical care team can better manage co-occurring conditions and reduce the risk for falls and injuries; better management may lessen secondary disorders and enhance their quality of life. Also, individuals with an early diagnosis can create advance directives for their care and finances.

The reality is that Alzheimer's is a degenerative disease that gradually destroys brain cells and is ultimately fatal. In the mild stage, memory loss and confusion begin to affect people's everyday activities. In the moderate and severe stages, the progressive destruction of nerve cells not only causes memory failure but also changes behavior and personality.

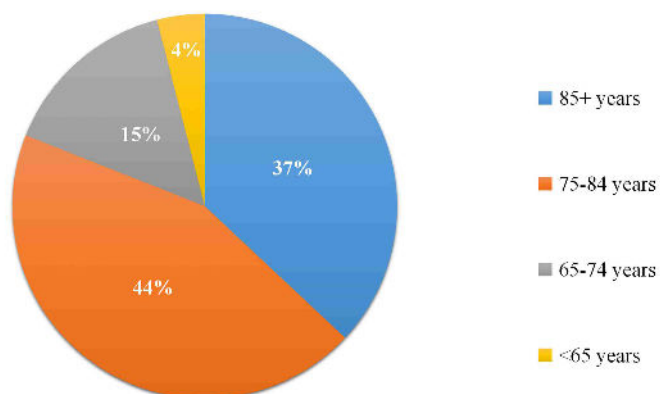
Physical abilities – including the ability to walk, sit, and eventually, to swallow – become impaired and communication is difficult. Ultimately, round-the-clock, intensive care becomes necessary.

Early detection and diagnosis are essential to protecting the wellbeing of people with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Unfortunately, as many as half of all people with dementia never have received a diagnosis.

Moreover, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, of those who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another dementia, only 35 percent of them or their caregivers are aware of the diagnosis.

Early detection is key to addressing the issues of Alzheimer's disease. Know the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's. At Helping Hands Outreach we have brochures with this information. You can also find information on our website under the Alzheimer's and Dementia Tab or call our phone library after 4:00 p.m. and access the information via a recorded message.

**Ages of People with Alzheimer's Disease in the United States, 2016**



## **You can give better care when you take care of yourself**

### **You are a caregiver if you:**

- Make phone calls to check in on a loved one.
- Drive a family member, friend or neighbor to doctor appointments.
- Make meals for someone.
- Help someone with household chores such as cleaning, laundry, and grocery shopping.
- Assist someone with their checkbook and bill paying.
- Help set up and/or assisted with medications.
- Care for someone who should not be left alone.
- Provide hands-on care, such as bathing or assistance with eating.

**You are not alone.** Our new adult day center was developed to provide respite to caregivers. These services are often covered by insurance and government programs. We Also have trained staff, volunteers and resources offering support to all caregivers. Please Give us a call at 320-746-9960 to learn more about our caregiver support services.

## **Get screened for Alzheimer's and receive a free gift**

Call us to arrange for a free Alzheimer's disease screening, and we'll give you a free gift. The screening is a brief verbal screening conducted in your home or at our office. Everyone who contacts us and attends a screening will receive their choice of a free Senior Perspective Cookbook or a gift certificate to a local restaurant (while supplies last). Call Helping Hands Outreach at 320-746-9960 for details.

## **Alzheimer's support resources**

**Alzheimer's Association Helpline:** Operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Highly-trained staff on all aspects of Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia. Call 800-272-3900.

**Family and individual care consultation:** Help families develop a plan for addressing issues and answering questions about dementia. Call the Alzheimer's Association Helpline.

## **Alzheimer's Education Opportunities:**

**Club or group presentations:** Educate your club members/groups on Alzheimer's disease, what are the signs, the myths and the realities.

**Alzheimer's Friends:** Learn the best approach to being a friend to someone with Alzheimer's. This program is great for families and volunteers.

**Becoming an Alzheimer's friendly business:** For business owners and employees who want to understand how to make their business welcoming to those with Alzheimer's.

Call Helping Hands at 320-746-9960 for details on these presentations.