

# Living Well with Alzheimer's Disease

## ***Taking the Long View***

Alzheimer's disease, the most common cause of dementia, affects the person's memory, thinking, and behavior. In the early stages, people begin to lose their memory of recent events (short-term memory), but they can still remember clearly things that happened a lot time ago. One of the earliest mental changes in the Alzheimer's disease is the loss of awareness of the memory problem.

The beginning symptoms of Alzheimer's differ from one person to the next. Any change in personality, thinking, or behavior in a person with Alzheimer's is likely to be caused by the disease.

A person who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's may have years of comfortable, good life remaining. Because most people develop Alzheimer's or other dementias when they are older, some may die of other causes before the slow progress of it interferes with their quality of life. Slowing the progress of the disease and reducing the severity of its symptoms are therefore important goals in the management of Alzheimer's and other related disorders.

## ***Strategies***

Strategies for living well with Alzheimer's disease include:

- Drug treatment
- Stroke prevention
- Family education and support
- Regular physical and mental activity
- Counseling for the patient and family
- Day care for the patient
- Respite care to relieve the family

**Get the  
Information You  
Need**

Your health care provider has information on medical treatment and stroke prevention. Information about other strategies is available through a nearby chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association and through national organizations. In addition, many books, pamphlets, newsletters, and web sites on living with Alzheimer’s disease are available.

Ask your health care provider and your public librarian for help in locating the latest information for families.

**How to Reach the Local Alzheimer’s Association**

