

## What Is Alzheimer's?

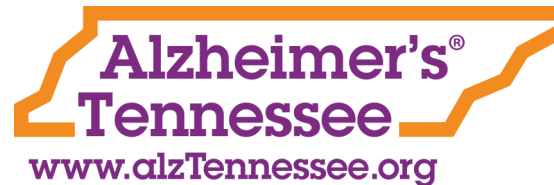


Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging. It is a brain disease. Early detection is important because medication may slow the progression of the disease.

- Alzheimer's is named after Dr. Alois Alzheimer, a German doctor. In 1906, Dr. Alzheimer described changes in the brain tissue of a woman who had died of an unusual mental illness. He found abnormal clumps (now called amyloid plaques) and tangled bundles of fibers (now called neurofibrillary tangles). These plaques and tangles are now considered the hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease.
- Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disease that impacts the brain, destroying memory and thinking skills and eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks of daily living. It is the most common cause of dementia.
- Alzheimer's usually starts in a region of the brain that affects recent memory, then gradually spreads to other parts of the brain. Although treatment may slow the progression of AD and help manage its symptoms in some people, currently there is no cure for this devastating disease.

## You Are Not Alone

- Family Counseling & Care-Planning
- Education & Resource Referrals
- Caregiver Training
- First Responder Education
- FREE Helpline
- Support Groups
- Advocacy
- Research



### Alzheimer's Tennessee Mission:

**To serve those facing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, to promote brain health through education, and to champion global research, prevention and treatment efforts.**

**Alzheimer's Tennessee, Inc. is the only independent 501(c)3 not for profit organization that has been in Tennessee for families facing Alzheimer's since 1983.**

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Serving Eastern Tennessee  
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### Regional Offices

<b>Northeast Tennessee</b> 2319 Browns Mill Rd, Ste D6 Johnson City, TN 37604 Phone: 423.330.4532	<b>Cumberlands</b> 1459 Interstate Dr., Ste 211 Cookeville, TN 38501 Phone: 931.526.8010
<b>Middle Tennessee</b> P.O. Box 150036 Nashville, TN 37215 Phone: 615.580.4244	<b>South Central Tennessee</b> 207 N. Jackson St. Tullahoma, TN 37388 Phone: 931.434.2348

www.alzTennessee.org | Toll Free 888.326.9888

# Alzheimer's Disease Overview

We Are All Affected  
By Alzheimer's



Alzheimer's  
Tennessee  
www.alzTennessee.org

Alzheimer's: A Journey  
No One Should Take Alone

# Alzheimer's Disease Overview

## Indicators of Dementia vs Normal Aging

Every case of Alzheimer's disease is different, but experts have identified common warning signs. A good support system is important for both the individual with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. Contact Alzheimer's Tennessee for more information.

	Normal Aging	Possible Indicator of Dementia
<b>Memory Loss</b>	Temporarily forget names or where you left your keys.	Difficulty remembering familiar names, places, or recent or important events.
<b>Disorientation</b>	Forget the day of the week or why you entered a room.	Get lost on your own street or forget where you are and how to get home.
<b>Challenged by Mental Tasks</b>	May take longer to complete daily tasks like preparing meals, or following instructions.	Unable to complete tasks that may be familiar to you such as balancing a checkbook or following a recipe.
<b>Difficulty Completing Activities of Daily Living</b>	Sometimes need assistance with an electronic device, housekeeping needs and personal care.	Difficulty using the phone or remote control. May require assistance making a grocery list or shopping.
<b>Trouble Using Words Appropriately</b>	Occasionally struggle to find the right word.	Difficulty completing sentences and following directions/conversations.
<b>Poor Judgment</b>	Make questionable or debatable decisions at times.	Unsure how to dress appropriately or giving money to solicitors excessively.
<b>Changes in Mood and Personality</b>	Fatigued by obligations or irritable when a routine is disrupted.	Increased suspicion, withdrawal and disinterest.

## If You're Concerned...

- Contact Alzheimer's Tennessee for further information and a referral to an assessment clinic.
- Not all memory problems are related to dementia. An assessment by a team of healthcare professionals will help to rule out other health issues.
- Obtaining an accurate medical diagnosis will help determine your individual treatment and assistance planning goals.
- Early diagnosis is very important. Medications currently available are most effective early in the disease process.

**Alzheimer's<sup>®</sup>  
Tennessee**  
[www.alzTennessee.org](http://www.alzTennessee.org)  
 888.326.9888