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ISSUE!

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WHAT IS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE?

Alzheimer's Disease damages the brain, which in turn, affects memory, behavior, and thinking. This disease is irreversible, which means that the damage cannot be repaired. It is also progressive, which means that it continues to worsen over time. Patients with Alzheimer's Disease are mainly older adults in their mid-60's. Alzheimer's Disease is ranked as one of the highest leading causes of death in the United States.

Alzheimer's Disease is also a common cause of dementia in elderly patients. Dementia is when there is no longer a function of cognitivity within a person. These cognitive functions include, thinking, memory, reasoning and other behavioral traits that aid in the ability to carry on with daily activities and life.



ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AFFECTS THE BRAIN

Alzheimer's Disease can cause severe, and irreversible damage to the brain over a matter of time. This disease is still under several studies and observations to understand why such changes occur in the brain during onset of Alzheimer's Disease and its progression.

Dangerous changes in the brain of a person affected by Alzheimer's may have begun many years prior to symptoms of memory loss, or other cognition issues.

The actual damage occurs when abnormal clumps of proteins called beta-amyloid plaques collect throughout the brain. The fibers of the brain also bundle together becoming tangled, this is called Tau Tangles. Most people develop some plaques and tangles as they age, however, people with Alzheimer's Disease develop far more, and in a predictable pattern. Healthy neurons in the brain lose their function, lose connection to other neurons, and then eventually die off. The hippocampus and the entorhinal cortex, the parts of the brain responsible for forming memories, initially receive the damage. Other parts of the brain begin to become affected when more neurons die, causing shrinkage to the brain. Alzheimer's Disease cause a significant shrink to the brain when it reaches its final stages. This shrinkage causes many issues beyond memory and motor function.



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SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, & STAGES

The earliest sign of Alzheimer's Disease is the difficulty of remember new information. Short-term memory loss is the most common symptom because Alzheimer's usually begins in the area of the brain that affects learning. Other symptoms include disorientation, drastic changes in mood and behavior, confusion regarding place and time, deepening suspicions about the people closest to them, and confusion about events. These symptoms occur when the Alzheimer's Disease begins to spread throughout the brain. When this disease advances to most areas of the brain, it impacts a person's physical movement. Difficulty speaking, walking, and swallowing is experienced, and they become completely dependent.

The stages of Alzheimer's are divided by severity.

Mild Alzheimer's Disease: This is the stage in which most people are diagnosed. With mild Alzheimer's, people experience difficulties with memory. With such difficulties, they may wonder or get lost, have trouble with handling money, may take longer with completing tasks, and experience sudden change in behavior.

Moderate Alzheimer's Disease:

Damage in areas of the brain that control language, reasoning, sensory processing, and conscious thought has begun in this stage. Those affected begin to increasingly decline with memory and recognition of their loved ones. Their confusion increases, cannot learn new things, and cannot complete simple tasks such as brushing their teeth.

Severe Alzheimer's Disease:

in this stage, the plaques and tangles within the brain has spreaded throughout, which in turn has significantly shrunken the tissue of the brain. A person in this stage is completely dependent as they cannot communicate, nor complete any task for themselves.

LOWER YOUR RISK

Although, there is no way to reduce your chances of Alzheimer's Disease, with careful maintenance, it is possible to lower your risk.

Stop Smoking: Smoking has never had any benefits anyway.

Eat a healthy balanced diet: eating balanced meals helps the body, and clears the mind. Make sure to include 5 fruits and vegetables a day.

Keep blood pressure under control: Stay abreast of your blood pressure, keeping a journal makes this task easy.

Mental Activity: Activities such as finding a hobby, board games, reading, learning languages, playing a musical instrument all help to keep the brain active and young.

Exercise: exercising for at least 150 minutes a week can help to keep your blood pumping efficiently, which can assist with clear thinking and memory.

Social activity: Activities such as taking a foreign language class, volunteering, and joining clubs help to keep the brain active and young through socialization.

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