



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: *March 2025*

A Note from Haven's Dementia Care Manager

March 10 – 16, 2025 is National Brain Awareness Week. It was founded in 1995 by the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives (DABI) and coordinated by the Dana Foundation. The goal of this campaign is to educate people around the world about the brain and to increase awareness about the progress and benefits being made through brain research. The late Chief Executive of the Dana Foundation, David Mahoney, envisioned that Brain Awareness Week would unite people from academia, government, and professional advocacy groups with the common goal to utilize research to find treatments and cures for brain-related diseases, provide hope for aging, and to ensure a better understanding of the brain. This year, there will be 131 events in 66 countries taking place. Each event is community-oriented, allowing those who organized them to make them more impactful.

To promote National Brain Awareness, we will be sharing education provided by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke entitled Brain Basics: Know Your Brain at our monthly support group meetings. This information can be found at the following link [Brain Basics: Know Your Brain | National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](#).

If there is a topic related to dementia that you would like more information on, please email me at anita.howard@havenhospice.com.

Sincerely,
Anita Howard
Dementia Care Program Manager



Learn more at
HavenHospice.com/Dementia

“While no one can change the outcome of dementia or Alzheimer’s, with the right support you can change the journey.”
- Tara Reed

10 Frequently Asked Questions About Alzheimer’s Disease

1. **What is Alzheimer’s Disease?**

Alzheimer’s is a brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills. It is the most common form of dementia.

2. **What is the difference between forgetfulness and Alzheimer’s Disease?**

Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias are not a typical part of aging whereas some forgetfulness may occur. Having difficulties remembering important dates, events, places, or people or struggling to do daily tasks such as bathing, driving, cooking, or shopping may indicate issues with memory or another health concern.

3. **What are common symptoms of Alzheimer’s?**

Early signs of dementia may include difficulty remembering, word finding, issues with determining how far apart objects are, and issues with making decisions or judgment.

4. **What happens as Alzheimer’s progresses?**

Early stages: People may experience memory loss and have difficulty thinking. In addition, they may present with issues such as wandering, getting lost, difficulty managing money or paying bills, repeating stories, or asking the same question over and over, taking longer to complete normal daily tasks such as getting dressed, and personality or behavioral changes.

Middle stages: People may present with difficulties with language, reasoning, thought, and sensory processing (vision, hearing, and smelling). They may be unable to retain new memories, learn new things, or recognize family and friends. Reading and writing skills deteriorate, become less coordinated increasing risk for falls, may become incontinent of bladder and/or bowel. Behavioral changes may continue resulting in increased outbursts, crying, aggression, or sundowning. It is not uncommon for people to develop visual and/or auditory hallucinations during this stage.

Late stages: People continue to lose ability to communicate and may become fully dependent on others for care. They may have decreased water and food intake and may sleep more during the day.

5. **What causes Alzheimer's Disease?**

There are no definitive causes of Alzheimer's Disease. Genetically, people present with mutations in the APOE-e4 gene and/or Amyloid precursor proteins resulting in loss of neurons and the development of plaque and tangles in the brain. Research shows that age-related changes in the brain coupled with genetic, health, and lifestyle choices may contribute to a person's risk.

6. **What are the risk factors associated with Alzheimer's?**

Age greater than 75 years (81% of those diagnosed are over age 75), family history, genetic mutations, history of mild cognitive impairment, traumatic brain injury, or other head injury.

7. **Will I get Alzheimer's Disease if a family member, has it?**

People with a parent or sibling are more at risk to develop the disease. This may be due to shared genetics, environment, and/or lifestyle preferences. Not everyone that has a family history of Alzheimer's will develop the disease. It is important to note, that not everyone with a diagnosis has a family history of Alzheimer's.

8. **Can Alzheimer's be treated or cured?**

There are medications available that may help manage or slow down the symptoms of Alzheimer's. There is no cure. It is imperative to discuss a treatment plan with your physician when a diagnosis is made to ensure that you or your loved one receives the best care possible.

9. **Is there a way to prevent Alzheimer's Disease?**

There is no way to prevent Alzheimer's Disease. However, taking steps to stay physically active (150 minutes per week), manage high blood pressure and/or diabetes, eat a healthy diet (mix of fruits and vegetables, lean meat/seafood, whole grains, unsaturated fats, low-fat dairy, and limit other fat/sugar), treat hearing problems (use hearing aid and protect ears from loud noise), sleep 7 – 8 hours per night, stay connected with family and friends, and stay mentally active (reading, learning new skills/hobbies, working or volunteering) may play a role in reducing risks associated with Alzheimer's Disease.

10. **Where can I find support as a caregiver of a person living with Alzheimer's?**

Resources for support may be found in this newsletter, at our Dementia Support Groups, and on our website [HavenHospice.com/Dementia](https://www.HavenHospice.com/Dementia).

Memory Boosters

In a recent edition of AARP magazine, Leslie Goldman, wrote that we expect our brains to be an archival system for our past. However, the brain has many other jobs such as decision-making, planning, creating self-awareness, establishing awareness of others, and communicating. Our brains must sort and select what gets stored so that it can carry out its main functions. It is normal for us to temporarily forget why we entered a room, a friend's name, or where we put the car keys.

Goldman suggests the six following tips to improve memory:

1. Reverse the 'doorway effect.' The "doorway effect" occurs when you physically or mentally leave one area for another. Our brain creates "mental bookmarks called event boundaries that divide time into before and after sections" for recall. For example, if you are going to get a glass of water out of the kitchen and the phone rings, you may forget what you were doing prior to the call. This is because our brain can be easily distracted by different sights, sounds, and thoughts, and emotions. To remember, you may need to mentally retrace your steps and in some cases, physically retrace your steps.
2. Be more aware of details like what the environment looks and smells like when you place down an item. For example, if you take your glasses off in the kitchen and lay them on the counter, you are more likely to find them by remembering that the stove was hot and the brownies smelled good.
3. Complete one task at a time. When we try to do more than one task at a time, we cause a lag in our brain as it reorients to complete the task at hand. Constance Schmidt, professor emeritus of psychology at Middle Tennessee State University indicated that when your attention is diverted, even for a fraction of a second, there are cognitive costs.
4. Read a book. Fiction challenges our working memory more than nonfiction because it forces us to follow the plot and keep up with each character.

5. Use mnemonics to create visual images to help you remember. Example: turn grocery list of turkey, apple pie, and plastic utensils into a picture of turkey with utensils about to eat a pie.



6. Live in the moment rather than taking pictures. Sometimes, taking a picture with our phone or camera can rob us of the emotions and true experience that we wanted to capture. By living in the moment, we can establish a memory.

Memory Joggers

Participating in trivia or reminiscing challenges our brains to recall events as they occurred during our lifetime. This neural activity may be triggered by sight, sounds (music), smells, tastes, or touch. Each time we recall, it's like putting a piece of a puzzle together.

Below are some phrases with one word left to be recalled. You may choose to leave out more words if your loved one is able to respond quickly. Simply read as much of the phrase as you desire and wait patiently for them to process and respond. You may also choose to use the phrases as conversation starters.

1. The best things in life are free.
2. Laughter is the best medicine.
3. Take it with a grain of salt.
4. We're all in the same boat.
5. Saving your money for a rainy day.
6. It's the thought that counts.
7. I'm as snug as a bug in a rug.
8. Close the door, you were not born in a barn.
9. April showers bring May flowers.
10. Money doesn't grow on trees.



Dementia Caregiver Support Groups: March 2025

If you are caring for a loved one with a dementia-related diagnosis and need some additional education and support, please join us. *Refreshments will be provided.*

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 | 4 - 5 p.m.

Haven Hospice Tri-Counties Care Center, Admin. Building (311 N.E. 9th St., Chiefland, FL)

Wednesday, March 12, 2025 | 3 - 4 p.m.

Senior Recreation Center, Eldercare of Alachua County (5701 NW 34th Blvd, Gainesville, FL)

Thursday, March 13, 2025 | 4 - 5 p.m.

Starling at Nocatee Assisted Living and Memory Care (999 Crosswater Pkwy, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL)

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Seagrass Village (1949 East West Parkway, Fleming Island, FL)

Thursday, March 20, 2025 | 3 - 4 p.m.

Vintage Care of Palatka (203 S Moody Rd, Palatka, FL)

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 | 4 - 5 p.m.

Tri-County Nursing Home (7280 SW State Rd 26, Trenton, FL)

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Grand Living at Tamaya - "Studio Room" on the 4th floor (3270 Tamaya Blvd., Jacksonville, FL)

Thursday, March 27, 2025 | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Allegro Senior Living - Fleming Island (3651 US Hwy 17, Fleming Island, FL)

RSVP to Anita Howard at 352.215.7465 or Anita.Howard@HavenHospice.com

Learn more about our program at HavenHospice.com/Dementia

800.HOSPICE | HavenHospice.com

Resources for Support

Alzheimer's and Related Dementia Education and Referral Center

Email: adear@nia.nih.gov

Phone: 1-800-438-4380

www.alzheimers.gov

The ADEAR Center can provide information on diagnosis, treatment, patient care, caregiver needs, long-term care, research and clinical trials. Staff can refer you to local and national resources.

Alzheimer's Association

Phone: 1-800-272-3900

www.alz.org

Offers information, a help line and support services for those living with dementia and their caregivers.

Eldercare Locator

Phone: 1-800-677-1116

<https://eldercare.acl.gov>

Provides information about local resources such as home care, Meals on Wheels, adult day care and nursing facilities.

National Adult Day Services Association

www.nadsa.org/consumers/choosing-a-center

Phone: 1-877-745-1440

Provides a safe environment, activities and staff that pay attention to the needs of the person while under their supervision. Adult Day Care Services typically charge an hourly rate.

National Institute on Aging

Email: niaic@nia.nih.gov

Phone: 1-800-222-2225

Offers free publications about aging that can be viewed, printed or ordered online.

References

Goldman, L. (December 2024/January 2025). **Six Memory Boosters: How to start remembering the small stuff, and the big stuff, more easily.**, AARP, 22 - 24.

[10 Frequently Asked Questions About Alzheimer's Disease](#) | National Institute on Aging. Adapted from the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health. Accessed March 3, 2025.

[Memory Joggers - JADCOM Media](#). Accessed March 3, 2025.

[Reducing Your Risk of Dementia](#). Adapted from the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health. Accessed March 3, 2025.

Sukel, K. (2025, February 27). Three Decades of Brain Awareness. [Three Decades of Brain Awareness - Dana Foundation](#). Accessed March 4, 2025.

[Brain Awareness Week Adult Events - Dana Foundation](#). Accessed March 4, 2025.