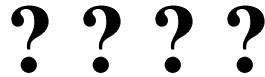


- 42. Caregivers need to ask for help from family and friends.
- 43. Help is available from the Alzheimer's Association, **Midlands Chapter**.
- 44. Understanding the disease helps caregivers cope.
- 45. Support groups can help caregivers deal with the difficult times.
- 46. Caregivers need to eat right, exercise and get enough rest.
- 47. Respite care, home health care or adult day services can give caregivers much needed breaks.
- 48. **It's necessary to treat an individual with AD with dignity and compassion.**
- 49. Caregivers need to treat themselves with dignity and compassion too.
- 50. **You don't have to go it alone. If AD is affecting your life, you can take steps to ease the suffering this disease can cause. Ask for help!**



[www.alz.org/midlands](http://www.alz.org/midlands)



Have you wondered about Alzheimer's disease? What it is? Who gets it? Are you worried about yourself or a loved one? This brochure has 50 important facts about Alzheimer's disease. If you would like more information, talk with your physician and contact the Chapter office.

**alzheimer's association**  
**Midlands Chapter**

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# 50 Things You Should Know About Alzheimer's disease

1. **Alzheimer's is a disease and not a mental disorder.**
2. An estimated 5.2 million Americans of all ages have Alzheimer's disease in 2008. This figure includes 5 million people age 65 and over and 200,000 individuals under age 65 who have early onset Alzheimer's.
3. AD impairs a person's memory, thinking, learning and judgment.



4. **The number one risk factor for AD is age.**
5. **Most people with AD are over 65.**
6. Approximately 47 percent of people over the age of 85 have AD.
7. Many people misplace items or forget people's names. This is normal and does not mean you have AD.
8. **Occasional memory loss does not turn into AD.**

9. Alert and cognitive individuals may lose their eyeglasses. Often individuals with AD may not know what glasses are.
10. AD is the most common form of the dementing diseases.
- 11. Another word for memory impairment is dementia.**
12. No one knows for sure what causes AD.
13. Studies show that children, siblings, and parents of individuals with AD have a slightly higher chance of developing AD.
- 14. At this time, there is no cure for AD.**
15. Scientists think ways to treat AD may be found in the near future.
- 16. If you suspect a loved one has AD, they should get a medical evaluation.**
17. It is important to see a doctor who specializes in care of the elderly.
18. Doctors diagnose AD by eliminating other causes.
19. The term dementia means the loss of intellectual functions that interfere with a person's daily functioning. It is not a disease itself.
20. Depression, stress and medication reactions can also cause temporary memory loss and confusion.
- 21. Many conditions that cause memory loss and confusion can be treated or reversed.**

22. AD is a progressive disease.
23. Symptoms vary from person to person.
24. In the early stages, symptoms may not be as pronounced.
- 25. Early symptoms of AD may include short term memory loss, forgetfulness and confusion.**



26. Individuals with AD may get lost driving to familiar places.
27. Personality changes, anxiety, and depression are also common in individuals with AD.
28. As the disease progresses, people often have trouble with the concept of time, dates, and place.
29. The most prominent early symptom is short-term memory loss.
30. Individuals may have problems doing routine tasks.
31. Individuals with AD may wander and not recognize loved ones.
32. They may also lose bladder and bowel control and be unable to care for their selves.

33. You will need to change what you expect from a person with AD.
- 34. Individuals with AD can still do meaningful activities, but you will need to match activities with their abilities.**
35. Individuals may forget how to play the piano but can still sing.
36. Individuals may not recognize loved ones but still enjoy visitors.
37. The average duration of AD is seven to ten years after diagnosis.
38. AD can run its course in two years or take as long as 20.



39. **Individuals with AD will need a durable power of attorney for financial and medical decisions.**
40. Individuals will need a will, advance medical directives, or living will drawn up.
41. Caring for someone with AD is very difficult.

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