

[<Back](#)

 [Print](#)

alzheimer's  association  
*Brain Matters*

Mid-July E-Newsletter

July 15, 2010

in this issue

[Early Diagnosis of Aggression in Elderly Veterans Could Improve Treatment Options, Study Shows](#)

[US News Issues Ranks Hospital Rankings for 2010-2011](#)

[New Recommendations for Alzheimer's Diagnosis](#)

[Early Alzheimer's Diagnosis Yields Savings](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[KBR Becomes a 2010 Chapter-Wide Memory Walk Supporter](#)

[New Chapter Staff](#)

**Early Diagnosis of Aggression in Elderly Veterans Could Improve Treatment Options, Study Shows**

• **US News Issues Ranks Hospital Rankings for 2010-2011**

For 2010-11, US News ranked hospitals in 16 specialties, from cancer and kidney disorders to orthopedics and urology. A total of 4,852 hospitals were put through their statistical wringer. This year, only 152 of the 4,852 hospitals evaluated performed well enough to rank in any specialty. And of the 152, just



14 qualified for a spot in the Honor Roll by ranking at or near the top in six or more specialties. Several Houston-area hospitals ranked among the 152 best in the country:

[Methodist Hospital](#), [Memorial Hermann - Texas Medical Center](#), [Texas Children's Hospital](#), [St Luke's Episcopal Hospital](#), [Texas Orthopedic Hospital](#), [UT MD Anderson Cancer Center](#), [TIRR Memorial Hermann](#), [Meninger Clinic](#).

• **New Recommendations for Alzheimer's Diagnosis**



July 13, 2010 -- Experts from the National Institute on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association have issued suggestions to update the criteria for the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease - the first update in 26 years.

The draft reports for the new criteria were presented Tuesday at the [Alzheimer's Association International Conference in Honolulu](#).

The criteria, aimed at better and earlier detection of



All his life, Hubert was a soft-spoken, mild-mannered guy with hardly any temper at all. But then on a day his wife, Margaret, will never forget, he balled up his fist and said, "If you don't move from that door, I'm going to knock the hell out of you."

This is aggression in dementia.

Dr. Mark Kunik, a psychiatrist at the VA Medical Center in Houston (and Alzheimer's Association Board member), recently concluded extensive research on this painful problem in order to help Veterans and their families deal with it in the future. He believes early treatment of elderly Veterans with dementia could improve their quality of life.

In a study published in *The Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, Kunik reported results of research underscoring the importance of effectively treating aggression in individuals with dementia.

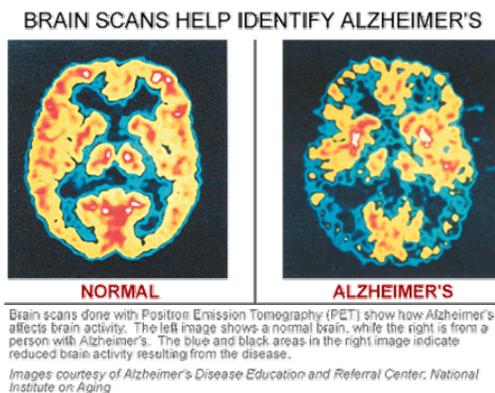
"Our study confirms findings of earlier studies that aggression is common in persons with dementia," said Kunik, primary author of the article.

"Veterans with dementia have memory problems, and when they can't remember how to do something, they become very frustrated and that can lead to aggressive behavior."

Alzheimer's disease, cover three stages believed to exist today: pre-clinical Alzheimer's, mild cognitive impairment, and the last stage, Alzheimer's dementia. [Read more about diagnosis.](#)

## • Early Alzheimer's Diagnosis Yields Savings

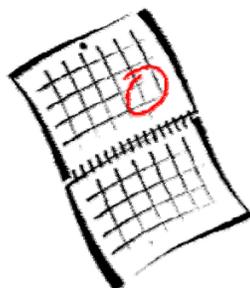
Early diagnosis of cognitive impairment can yield substantial savings in medical costs for Alzheimer's patients, according to a new study unveiled Wednesday.



Patients often aren't diagnosed until they are in the late throes of the disease, when their day-to-day functioning is affected. Meanwhile, as they try to manage on their own, many fail to take medications for such chronic conditions as diabetes, or experience falls and accidents leading to costly hospitalizations.

Simple techniques exist to screen for memory problems but many doctors don't routinely use them. Increasingly, however, efforts are being made to diagnose patients' cognitive impairment earlier to improve the treatment and management of the disease. [Learn more about early diagnostic tests.](#)

## • Upcoming Events



### [Know the 10 Signs: Early Detection Matters](#)

Friday, July 23rd 10 -11AM  
Tracy Gee Community Center  
3599 Westcenter Dr., Houston,  
TX 77042

### [The Next Steps: Life Planning Tips After an Alzheimer's Diagnosis](#)

Monday, August 2nd 10:15 am  
Houston's First Baptist Church  
7401 Katy Freeway Rm. 249, Houston, TX

Margaret, who participated in Kunik's research, verifies this. Her husband, Hubert, an 81-year-old Veteran, became very frustrated when he could not remember her or their son, Jay.

Kunik reminds caregivers and family members that aggression in dementia is not a willful act. "Our brain controls how we act and make decisions...how we see the big picture...and a person with dementia can get angry when they can't do that."

Kunik's study emphasizes the importance of early diagnosis and effective treatment of aggression as a means of preventing or minimizing consequences such as injuries, use of psychiatric medications and nursing-home placement; all of which can have a profound impact on an individual's quality of life.

For Margaret, the impact could not be more profound. Hubert, with advanced Alzheimer's disease, is now in a hospice and losing weight daily. Yet she keeps a calm voice of acceptance and awareness of his situation. "When I visit him, sometimes he seems to recognize me and says, 'Hi, Babe.' We have to take it one day at a time."

Kunik encourages family members and caregivers to know the warning signs of Alzheimer's and to contact their family doctor when any of the signs appear. [Click to read more.](#)

[Bazelides Research Update](#) Tuesday, August 3rd 7 - 8: 30 p.m.  
Jewish Community Center Kaplan Theatre  
5601 S. Braeswood Houston, TX 77096

**Alzheimer's Awareness Night with the Astros**  
August 19, 2010  
[Half-price tickets available on-line.](#)

[Chevron Houston Marathon - Run To End Alzheimer's](#)  
On-Line Registration Lottery begins July 27th, 6:01am  
Marathon: Sunday, January 30, 2011

• **KBR Becomes a 2010 Chapter-Wide Memory Walk Supporter**

KBR, which has previously has supported the Chapter through Memory Walk teams and Alzheimer's Awareness events, has become a Chapter-Wide Memory Walk Champion sponsor. We are pleased to announce that KBR has committed to Memory Walk again this year as a Chapter Wide Champion sponsor.

"This gift will help us to continue to provide care and support for the more than 140,000 families affected by Alzheimer's in our area" said Richard Elbein, CEO of the Alzheimer's Association, Houston & Southeast Texas Chapter.

KBR is a global engineering, construction and services company supporting the energy, hydrocarbon, government services, minerals, civil infrastructure, power and industrial markets.

Memory Walk is the nation's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer care, support and research. Last year, over five thousand walkers in Southeast Texas raised over \$620,000 for local Alzheimer's care, support, and research.

[Find a walk in your area](#), or call Jessica at 713 314 1343 to learn how your company or organization can MOVE TO END ALZHEIMER'S.

• **New Chapter Staff**



We're very pleased to welcome new members of the Chapter team.

---

Quick Links...

- [Chapter Website](#)
- [Join us on Facebook](#)
- [Raise Your Voice for Alzheimer's](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Personalized Family Support](#)
- [Sign Up for Memory Walk](#)

[richard.elbein@alz.org](mailto:richard.elbein@alz.org)  
<http://www.alz.org/texas>

800.272.3900 Toll Free HELPLINE -  
713.314.1313

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to richard.elbein@alz.org by [richard.elbein@alz.org](mailto:richard.elbein@alz.org) | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Alzheimer's Association Houston & Southeast Texas Chapter | 2242 W Holcombe Blvd. | Houston | TX | 77030-2008