Alzheimer's Disease and Other Related Dementias (ADRD)

Understanding the basics of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Related Dementias.

DC HEALTH
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

What is the ADRD?

- **Dementia** is a general term for symptoms like memory loss or confusion that make daily life harder.
- **Alzheimer's Disease** is the most common type, causing 60–80% of dementia cases. It affects memory, thinking, and behavior over time.
- Common signs of Alzheimer's Disease:
  - Memory loss that disrupts daily life
  - Confusion with time or place
  - Trouble doing familiar tasks
  - Mood or behavior changes
  - Poor judgment or decision-making

How to Know If I'm At Risk?

Certain factors raise your risk of Alzheimer's Disease:

- Being 65 or older
- Having a family history of Alzheimer's Disease or carrying certain genes (e.g., APOE-e4 gene)
- Having other chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure or obesity
- Experiencing hearing loss or having previous head injuries
- Lifestyle factors such as poor diet, physical inactivity, smoking, or social isolation

B.R.A.I.N.

Be Active

Exercise regularly to boost blood flow to the brain.

Right Nutrition

Eat a balanced diet low in saturated fat and high in fruits, veggies, and whole grains.

Avoid Isolation

Stay social. Connection helps protect memory and mood.

Involve Your Mind

Challenge your brain with puzzles, reading, or learning new skills.

Nurture Your Health

Manage chronic conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, and hearing loss with regular checkups.

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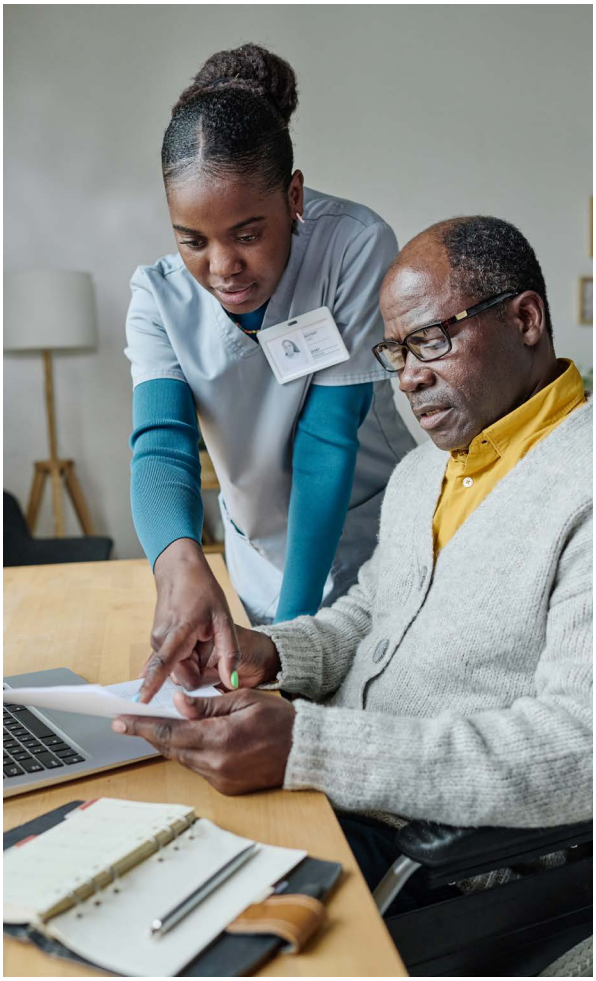
How ADRD be Managed or Treated?

While there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's, you can slow symptoms to improve quality of life by:

- **Regular Doctor Visits:** Seeing your primary doctor regularly with your caregiver to create a care plan.
- **Specialists:** Visiting a neurologist or memory care doctor who specializes in the brain and nervous system.
- **Medications:** Talking to your doctor(s) about FDA-approved drugs to slow down memory loss.
- **Healthy Habits:** Exercising regularly, eating healthy and staying social to help keep the brain strong.
- **Brain Activities:** Staying active by doing puzzles, reading, and other activities that help maintain memory.
- **Care Planning:** Talking to your caregivers and long-term care team to provide support.



Resources

» **DC Brain Health Initiative:** Community education & resources brainhealth.dc.gov

» **DC Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL):** Support for individuals with dementia and caregivers dacl.dc.gov

» **DC Villages:** Help with transportation, tech, groceries, and more dcvillages.org

» **LivingWell DC:** Free tools for healthy habits livingwell.dc.gov

» **Alzheimer's Association:** 24/7 helpline & caregiver support alz.org

» **National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Institute on Aging (NIA):** Research, clinical trials & brain health info nia.nih.gov