



JUNE 2023

REGION 9 AREA AGENCY ON AGING CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER

Serving the Counties of: Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle and Roscommon

TRAVELING WITH A PERSON WHO HAS DEMENTIA



Traveling with someone with dementia is tough, even for an experienced caregiver. The reality is that you will need to manage unexpected and stressful situations, challenging behaviors, and lack of sleep.

If someone is in late-stage dementia, travel is usually not recommended. At this point, the person with dementia will likely be easily fatigued and overwhelmed by everyday activities, more vulnerable to illness or infection, or struggling with physical abilities like sitting, eating, or swallowing.

Tips for Traveling with Someone with Dementia

- During your trip, maintain a daily routine as much as possible. This will help lessen confusion.
- Wake up at the same time each morning and go to bed at the same time each evening.
- Keep regular meal times.
- Have comfort items such as pillows, snacks, and water readily available when you travel. This includes any kind of transportation including bus, train, car, or airplane.

DEMENTIA: EIGHT ELEMENTS OF THOUGHT



Dementia is an umbrella term that refers to a decline in cognitive functioning and behavior changes that affect daily functioning. Dementia is a set of symptoms and can be caused by a variety of illnesses.

Dementia is an umbrella term used to describe a set of symptoms that can include changes in the following elements of thought.



THINKING



ATTENTION



JUDGEMENT



MEMORY



LANGUAGE



REASONING



ABSTRACTION



PERCEPTION



TRUALTA

Tualta is a free online personalized, skills-based training platform for family caregivers caring for someone living at home.

- Short, quick lessons created by experts in aging.
- Easy to use for all ages, completely private, and accessible 24/7.
- No app is required, view on any browser, computer, laptop, phone, or tablet.
- Social features, like virtual support groups.

Key Topics:



Personal Care



Responding to Behaviors



Supporting Wellness



Safety & Injury Prevention



Navigating Healthcare Visits



Caregiver Wellness



Future Planning



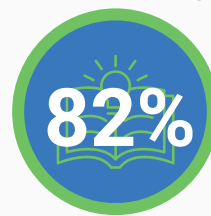
90% of participants would recommend Tualta to another caregiver.



75% report that Tualta helped keep their care recipient at home longer.



88% said Tualta helped them feel more confident as a caregiver.



82% of caregivers reported learning something new.

Enroll at: www.region9aaa.tualta.com/login



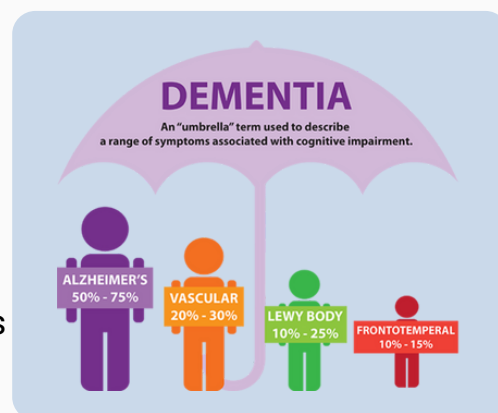
TYPES OF DEMENTIA

The most common cause of dementia is *Alzheimer's Disease*, named after Dr. Lois Alzheimer, who discovered the disease. Abnormal proteins called plaques and tangles grow in the nerve cells and the spaces between the brain cells, damaging and eventually destroying nerve cells.

The second most common cause of dementia is cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular dementia occurs when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted by a stroke or a mini-stroke.

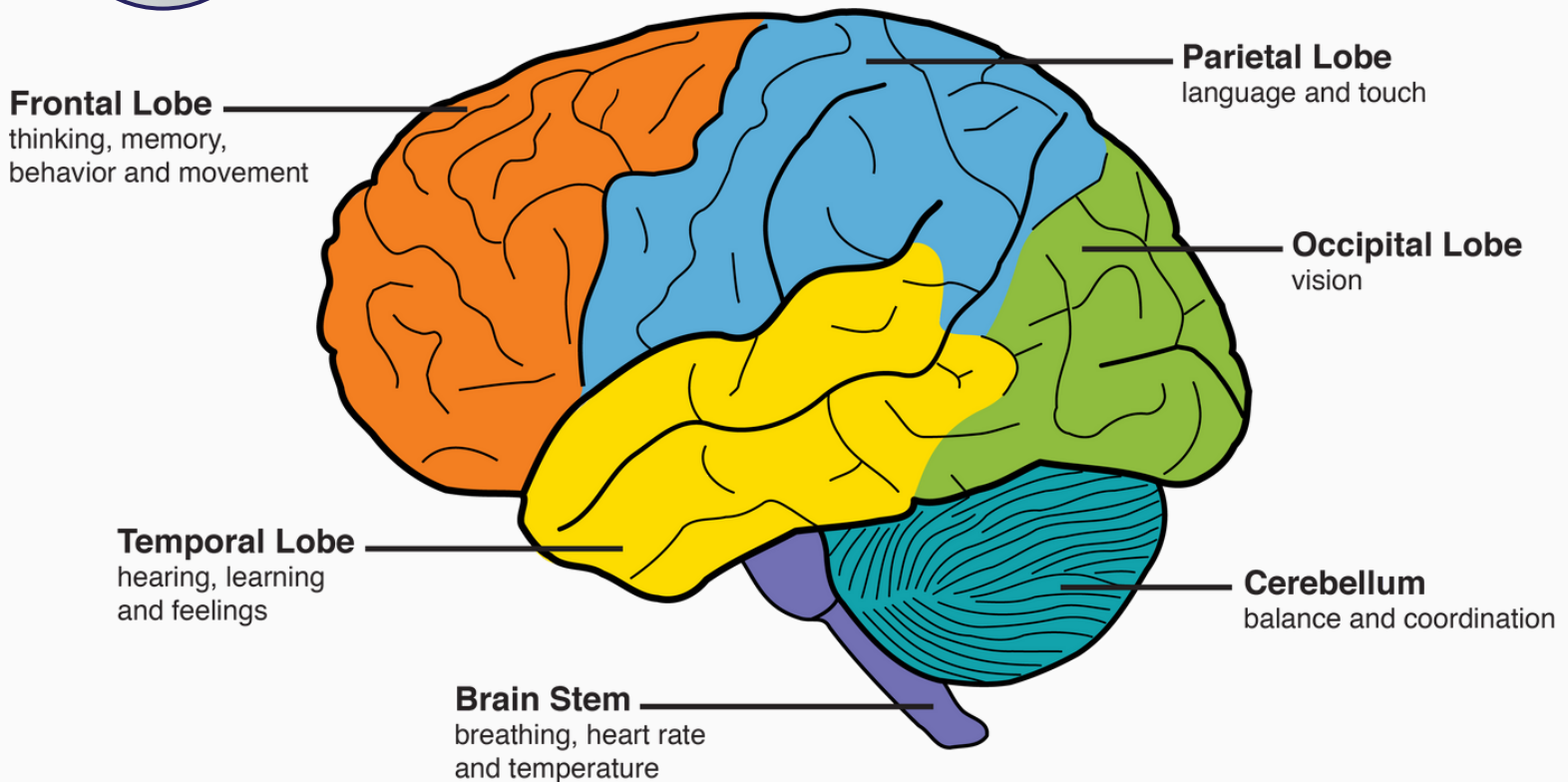
Other causes of dementia include Lewy Body disease, which causes symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease, frontal lobe dementia, and alcoholism.

Some causes of dementia are reversible. For example medication side effects, B-12 deficiency, and depression can cause dementia or make the symptoms worse. This is why it's important to consult a doctor about memory loss.





BEHAVIOR AND PHYSICAL CHANGES



The damaged areas of the brain include:

- **Frontal Lobe** - Behavior, judgment, emotional control center, and home to our personality
- **Temporal Lobe** - Responsible for processing affect/emotions, language, and certain aspects of visual perception.
- **Parietal lobe** - Responsible for integrating sensory input, and construction of a spatial coordinate system to represent the world around us.
- **Occipital Lobe** - Responsible for visual perception, including color, form, and motion.
- **Hippocampus** - Area of the brain that helps new memories form.
- **Cerebellum** - Coordinates movements, balance, and posture, and helps the eyes to work together.
- **Brain Stem** - Controls automatic functions such as breathing, digestion, heart rate, and blood pressure.
- **Amygdala** - Key to how we process strong emotions like fear or pleasure

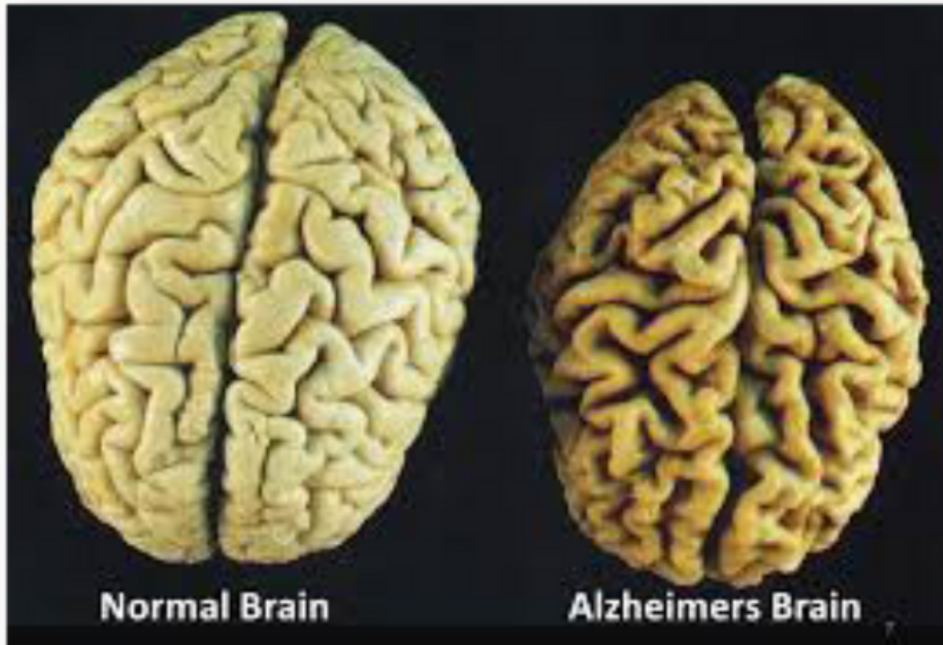
Facts about the Brain:

- Your brain is your most powerful organ, yet weighs only about three pounds. It has a texture similar to firm jelly.
- About 75% of the brain is made up of water.
- 60% of the human brain is made of fat, making it the fattiest organ in the human body,
- The human brain contains approximately one hundred billion neurons.
- Your brain isn't fully formed until age 25.
- The human brain can generate about 23 watts of power (enough to power a lightbulb).





PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF DEMENTIA



This picture shows a normal brain and a brain with Alzheimer's disease.

Dementia is caused by damage to brain cells. This damage interferes with the ability of brain cells to communicate with each other. When brain cells cannot communicate normally, thinking, behavior, and feelings can be affected.

Other Physical Changes:

- Mobility
- Pressure ulcers
- Infections and blood clots



WAYS TO MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

- Learn healthy ways to manage your stress.
- Think of challenges as opportunities to shine.
- Look for the best in others and yourself.
- Eat right and get plenty of rest.
- Exercise for 30 minutes or more on most days of the week.
- Focus on the joys in life and remember to laugh.
- Do something nice for someone.
- Make time each day to relax.
- Surround yourself with upbeat people.
- Take pride in your work and your achievements.

44.6

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK A SPOUSE/PARTNER SPENDS CARING FOR THEIR LOVED ONE.





CANCER SCREENING RECOMENDATIONS

Screening tests are used to find cancer in people who have no symptoms. Screening increases the chances of finding certain cancers early, when they are small, have not spread, and might be easier to treat.

These recommendations are for people at average risk for certain cancers. Talk to a doctor about which tests you might need and the screening schedule that's right for you.

Age 25-39

Cervical Cancer

Age 40-49

Breast Cancer
Cervical Cancer
Colorectal Cancer

Age 50+

Breast Cancer
Cervical Cancer
Colorectal Cancer
Lung Cancer
Prostate Cancer

As you think about starting your screenings or getting your screening tests back on track, here are some questions you can ask your doctor:

- What cancer screening tests are recommended for someone my age?
- How often should I get the screening tests?
- Do I need to see any specialists to get my screening tests done, or can you order all of them?
- Which of the screening tests should I get first?
- Do I have to get screened right away or can I wait?
- How long can I wait to schedule my screening tests?
- If I canceled or postponed a screening appointment, when should I reschedule?
- Is it harmful, if I missed my regular screening test?
- Is it safe to get screened now?
- Where can I go to get screened?
- What precautions are being taken by the facility to help reduce the spread of COVID-19?
- What are the risks and benefits of getting screened now compared to putting it off until later, given my personal and family history, risk factors, and when I got my last screening test?
- Are there screening tests that I can do at home?
- How do I schedule my screening tests?
- Can someone help me schedule my screening tests?
- Will my screening tests be covered by my health insurance?
- What will the screening tests cost if they are not covered by insurance?
- When will I get the results of my screening test and who will give me the results?
- Do I need to come back and see you at another appointment to find out the results?
- What happens if my results show possible signs of cancer?



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Physical and emotional support are what most family caregivers need. Physical support can help take care of your family member by helping with daily tasks, decision-making, preparing meals, running errands, and performing chores. Emotional support helps the family caregiver to deal with the stress of caring for an elderly person.

Questions to Consider:

1. What type of help does my person need right now to live as independently as possible?
2. What types of help might be needed in the future?
3. How much money is available to pay for outside resources?
4. Will insurance cover any services?
5. What types of help are my friends and family members willing to provide?

Helpful Websites for Caregivers:

- [Alzheimer's Association](#)
- [American Cancer Society](#)
- [American Diabetes Association](#)
- [Region 9 AAA Caregiver Resource Center](#)
- [Family Caregiver Alliance](#)
- [Eldercare Locator](#)
- [Michigan Dementia Coalition](#)
- [National Alliance for Caregiving](#)
- [Caregiver Wellness Solution Center](#)
- [Caregiver Action Network](#)
- [AARP Caregiver Page](#)
- [Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Caregiver Action Network Resource Toolbox](#)
- [Michigan's Aging Website Caregiver Page](#)
- [Medicare.gov](#)
- [Elder Law of Michigan](#)
- [Michigan Legal Help](#)
- [Trualta](#)
- [Disability Network of Northern Michigan](#)
- [988 Suicide and Crisis Line](#)

- Support Groups
- Health and Wellness Workshops
- Commission on Agings/Senior Citizen Centers
- Area Agency on Aging's
- Respite care
- In-Home Services
- Adult Day Centers
- Legal Services
- Veteran Resources
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- [National Institute on Aging](#)
- Financial Assistive Programs
- Disease Foundations/Organizations

[211](#) is a comprehensive source of information about local resources and services in the country.

84%

OF FAMILY CAREGIVERS REPORT THEY WANT MORE INFORMATION AND HELP ON CAREGIVING TOPICS ESPECIALLY RELATED TO SAFETY AT HOME AND DEALING WITH STRESS.



IMPORTANT DATES

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

AUGUST 15 - SEPTEMBER 19, 2023
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

NOVEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 13, 2023
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Dementia Webinar Series 2023:

JULY 14, 2023: ALZHEIMERS
ASSOCIATION: COPING WITH CHANGE,
GRIEF, AND LOSS

AUGUST 11, 2023: COPING WITH
DEMENTIA CARE STRESS

(FREE MAILER AFTER ATTENDING
WEBINAR)

Caregiver Webinar Series:

SEPTEMBER 8, 2023: MEDICARE
HEALTH CARE BENEFIT: HOSPICE VS.
PALLIATIVE WHEN DO YOU QUALIFY

OCTOBER 13, 2023: PREPARING TO
CARE: CAREGIVING 101

NOVEMBER 10, 2023: BUILDING
RESILIENCE TO AVOID BURNOUT

DECEMBER 8, 2023: TECHNOLOGY
TOOLS FOR CAREGIVING

JANUARY 12, 2024: THE NEUROSCIENCE
OF AFRICAN AND ONE LITTLE WORLD

FEBRUARY 9, 2024: IMPORTANCE OF
PLANNING AHEAD FOR LEGAL MATTERS

Healthy Living Webinar

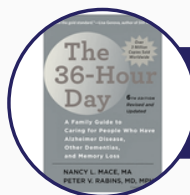
NOVEMBER 8, 2023: CHAIR
EXERCISES

DECEMBER 13, 2023: IMPORTANCE
OF SELF-CARE



PRACTICE GOOD ORAL HEALTH BY:

- Brushing your teeth at least twice a day.
- Flossing daily.
- Eating a healthy diet.
- Limiting meals between meals.
- Replacing your toothbrush every three-four months.
- Scheduling regular dental checkups, at least twice a year.



READING IDEAS

THE 36-HOUR DAY

Book by Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins

The 36-Hour Day is an essential resource for someone who cares for someone with dementia. The 36-Hour Day will help caregivers address dementia-related behaviors, challenges, and caregiver emotions.

HOW TO CARE FOR AGING PARENTS

Book by Virginia Morris

Road map for adult children, it covers everything from the first conversations, needing assistance to funeral arrangements.

Features practical advice on home care, finances, fraud, nursing homes/hospitals, legal issues, and medical/safety concerns. It also provides advice for caregivers dealing with their emotions, from sibling conflict to grief.

CAN'T WE TALK ABOUT SOMETHING MORE PLEASANT?

Book by Roz Chast

Through a mix of honesty, compassion, and humor, Chast will make you laugh and cry as she recounts her parents' foibles and phobias, hoarding, and occasional irrationality as well as her own doubts, fears, and paradoxical feelings. While not a caregiving guide, the book can help caregivers face their own feelings and difficulties while caring for a loved one.



WHERE CAN I FIND MORE HELPFUL INFORMATION?

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging's Special Projects Coordinator is available weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer your questions, register you for caregiver workshops, provide resources, and to support you and the person you are caring for.

**Contact Brooke at 989.358.4616 or
mainvilleb@nemcsa.org**