

What is Alzheimer's Disease? (middle stage)

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is a neurological condition in which the nerve cells in the brain die. The onset of AD is typically gradual, and the first signs of it may be attributed to old age or ordinary forgetfulness.

As the disease advances, cognitive abilities, including the ability to make decisions and perform everyday tasks, are eroded, and personality changes and difficult behaviors may emerge. In its later stages, AD leads to dementia and eventually death.

Middle Stage Alzheimer's Disease

- Difficult behaviors emerge (i.e, anger, wandering, incontinence, suspiciousness, etc.)
- Increased difficulty in verbal expression and comprehension
- Loss of ability to manage finances
- Spatial problems (e.g., having trouble setting the table)
- Loss of reading, writing and arithmetic abilities
- Loss of coordination
- Will need care or supervision 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- May not recognize family and friends at times

Caregiving In the Middle Stage

During middle stage of AD, the caregiver's role will expand to full time. Keeping the person with AD safe will become a priority. Both the person with AD and the caregiver will need help and support.

- Emotional Support:** People caring for loved ones with AD frequently feel isolated, and it is common for caregivers to suffer from grief and loss as the person they are caring for changes.
- Respite Care:** Caregivers need breaks, which is what "respite care" really is. Respite care includes adult day care programs, in-home help, and short nursing home stays. Other family members or friends, professional caregivers, or volunteer caregivers can provide respite care.
- Safety:** Creating a safe and comfortable environment is important. For people with AD who wander, the local police should be advised, and the person should be registered with the Alzheimer's Association's Safe Return program.
- Medical Care:** The person with AD will need ongoing medical care both for AD and for any other health problems that might arise. The caregiver will become the spokesperson for the person with AD. The stress of caregiving can affect your health. Be sure to take care of yourself. If you need to be hospitalized or need time off from your caregiving duties, emergency respite care can be arranged.
- Planning for the Future:** Many caregivers wish to keep their loved one at home with them. If more care—or a different type of care—is needed than what you can provide at home, look into care options. Consider hiring in-home care to help.

For more information call:
708-786-8600

