



Alzheimer's 101: Important Tips for Caregivers

Today, Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, or "loss of intellectual function" among people aged 65 and over. It is estimated that as many as 5.2 million Americans may currently have Alzheimer's disease. Current research from the National Institute on Aging indicates that the prevalence of Alzheimer's doubles every five years beyond age 65.

Warning Signs of Alzheimer's Disease

Although every individual and every situation is different, experts have identified the following common warning signs:

- Memory loss, especially of recent events, names, placement of objects and other new information
- Struggling to complete familiar actions, such as brushing teeth or getting dressed
- Trouble finding the appropriate words, completing sentences and following directions and conversations
- Confusion about time and place
- Poor judgment when making decisions
- Changes in mood and personality, such as increased suspicion, rapid and persistent mood swings, withdrawal and disinterest in usual activities
- Difficulty with complex mental assignments, such as balancing a checkbook or tasks involving numbers

Coping with Alzheimer's in a Loved One

While there is currently no known cure for Alzheimer's today, medical research continues. Recently, some promising study results have been reported regarding the effects of coffee consumption and regular exercise in delaying the onset of Alzheimer's and possibly minimizing its symptoms. However, most medical experts agree that finding a cure is still years away.

A variety of resources is available to assist caregivers who are caring for their loved one at home. These include Alzheimer's Association services, support groups, self-help guides, respite care services, in-home support, community-based services and educational programs.

For caregivers who recognize that the needs of their loved one are beyond what they can safely and appropriately provide in the home environment, leading memory care assisted living communities, such as North Woods Village at Edison Lakes and its "**New Directions**",SM are available to assist you. North Woods Village provide a safe, professional environment and proven, "best-practice" programs and services specifically designed to address the total physical, emotional and social needs of individuals with Alzheimer's, dementia or memory challenges.

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