

Healthy Aging

Aging, Health, and Dementia(s)

Western Carolina Chapter

Program Objectives

- Aging
- Dementia and Alzheimer's
- Aspects of Healthy Living
 - Physical
 - Cognitive
 - Social
 - Diet & Nutrition
- Approaching dementia related challenges and nutrition

The Brain and Aging

- Control center
- Networks of pathways generating messages
- Neurons decrease with age
- Living neurons make new connections
- We all age differently
 - Can't control genetic predisposition
 - Can control lifestyle and environment
 - Can't "stop" Alzheimer's
 - Can improve our resiliency and minimize risks
- ***How do we distinguish changes due to aging and those that may signal a potentially serious health threat?***

“Typical” changes

- Lapses of memory
- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty with details
- Absentmindedness
- Loosing something
- Cardiovascular
- Skeletal and muscular
- Sensory
- Metabolic

Focus, concentrate, vocabulary, wisdom ↑

Problematic Changes

- Memory
- Planning or problem solving
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusion with time or place
- Problems with words/ language
- Changes in mood and personality
- **Changes that suggest disruptions in brain function**
- **Changes that disrupt daily life**
- **Changes that are a decline from a prior state of ability**

Dementia Defined

- “Umbrella” term
- A syndrome characterized by decline in cognitive functioning sufficient to interfere with daily life
- Reversible Dementia related conditions

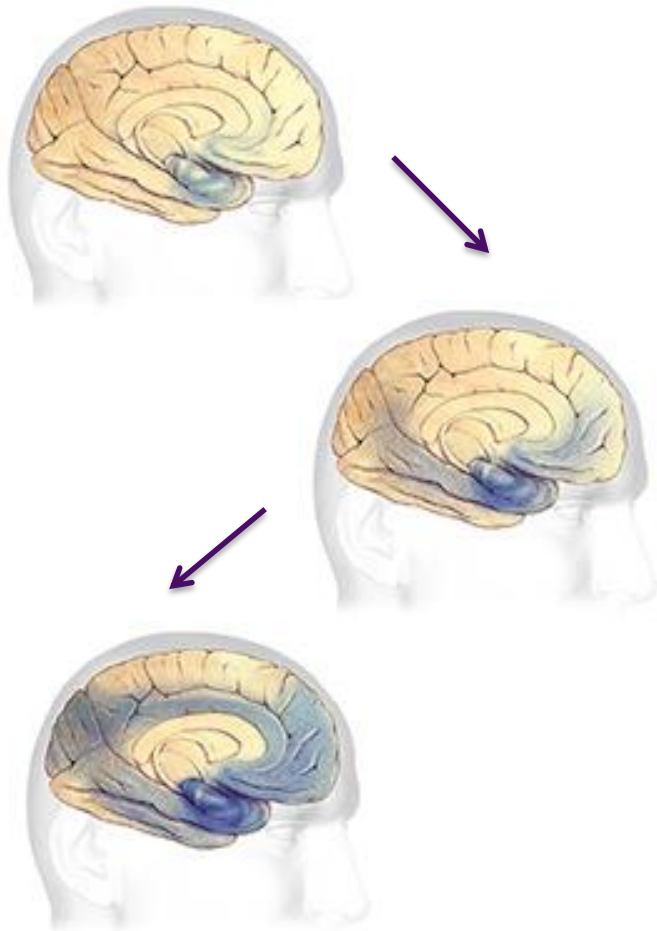
What's the difference between **ALZHEIMER'S** and **DEMENTIA**?

The infographic features the word 'DEMENTIA' in large, stylized letters. The 'D' and 'M' are on the left, and 'E', 'N', 'T', 'I', 'A' are on the right. A vertical line descends from the 'M' and 'N' area, ending in a curved hook at the bottom, resembling the handle of an umbrella. Various dementia types are listed as raindrops falling from the 'DEMENTIA' canopy. On the left side, from top to bottom: Vascular Dementia, Mixed Dementia, Frontotemporal Dementia, Normal pressure hydrocephalus, and Huntington's Disease. On the right side, from top to bottom: **ALZHEIMER'S** the most common form, Parkinson's, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, and Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome.

ALZHEIMER'S
the most common form

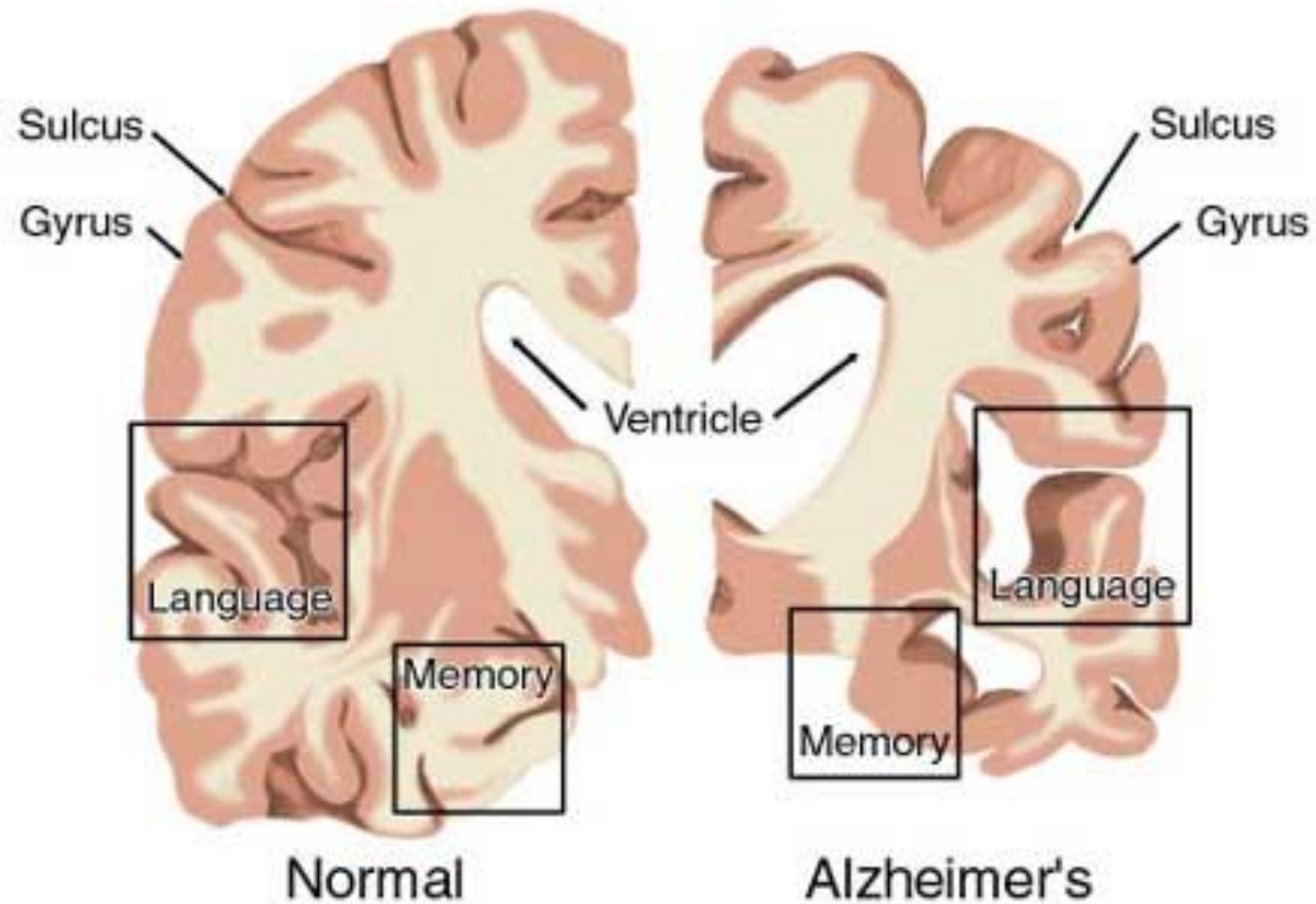
Dementia is an umbrella term that describes a wide range of symptoms including memory loss and mental decline. Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, but there are many others.
Learn more at alz.org/relateddementias

Alzheimer's Disease



- Recognized by Alois Alzheimer in 1907
- Progressive brain disorder
- Most common form of dementia (approx. 70% of diagnosis)
- Has no cure, is eventually fatal
- Individualistic disease
- Pathological hallmarks
 - *plaques and tangles*

Brain Cross-Sections



Stages

Early (Mild)

- Memory
- Able to participate in decision making
- May misinterpret others

Middle (Moderate)

- Basic words and sentences
- Rely more on tone of voice, facial, body language
- More behavior changes

Late (Severe)

- Five senses to connect
- Dependent upon care for ADLs

Physical

- What's good for your heart is good for your brain
- Increases blood flow to the brain → increases oxygen and nutrients to brain cells & Improves heart and lung capacity
- May promote regeneration/ development of brain cells
- Must be regular and tend toward more vigorous (min 30 minutes a day several times a week)
- Walking
- www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html and www.alz.org

Cognitive

- Cultivate good memory habits, sharpen recent memory, enhance brain function, increase resilience
- Stimulation and education
 - Calendars
 - Organize Clutter
 - Focus your Attention
 - Use Memory Tricks
 - Cross Train your Brain
- Resources
 - www.positscience.com/prodcuts, www.mindfit.com, happy-neuron.com, www.lumosity.com
 - Games.aarp.org, www.enchantedmind.com, www.mazeworks.com, www.ravensburger-webpuzzles.com, www.youramazingbrain.org/testyourself/default.htm

Social

- Less research
- Engagement may reduce mortality rates and disability
- Decrease isolation
- Decrease depression
- Increase purpose & meaning
- Can combine with healthy cognitive and physical activities to maximize
- *Emphasize “what I can do”*
- *Alzheimer’s Association Early Stage Program*
- *Opportunities and activities through Senior Centers*

Diet & Nutrition

- ↓ Smoking
- ↓ Alcohol
- ↓ Caffeine
- ↑ Omega 3 fatty acids
- ↑ Folate
- ↑ Antioxidants
- ↑ Vitamin D
 - Mediterranean Diet
 - DASH Diet
- Vitamins & Supplements

Alzheimer's and Nutrition

- Changes across disease progression
 - Accessible
 - Preparation
 - Environment / Eating Out
 - Red Flags
 - Weight loss
 - Spoiled foods
- Health Concerns
 - Swallowing, choking
 - Dehydration
 - Dental Care

Alzheimer's and Nutrition

- Strategies/ Considerations
 - Restaurants
 - Medication Side Effects
 - Juice, jello, soups, ice creams, liquid cereals, finger foods
 - Table set-up
 - Environment
 - Thickened liquids
 - Cold rather hot
 - Mouth care (dentures, sores, pocketed foods)

Ideas To Remember

- Holistic
- Maximize
- Know the person you are working with. What do they like/dislike?
- Think about what he/she *can* do
- What's good for your heart is good for your brain
- Disease progression will bring changes and challenges
- Plan ahead
- Take care of the care-giver
- Handouts
 - HLBB Handout and Work Book
 - Eating (www.alz.org)
 - Eat (5), Move (10), Sleep (8) & Baseline Quiz

Alzheimer's Association Program & Services

- Support Groups
- Information & Referral
- Care Consultation
- Safety Services – Medic Alert®+Safe Return®
- Education
- Advocacy
- Walk to End Alzheimer's



24 Hour Helpline – 1.800.272.3900