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FAMILY PHYSICIANS PROMOTE ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—According to the Alzheimer's Association, approximately 4 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, including one in 10 persons over age 65.

Alzheimer's disease is a degenerative brain disease that begins gradually causing a person to be forgetful. Over time it may cause confusion, personality and behavior changes and impaired judgment.

After the onset of symptoms, a person with Alzheimer's disease will live an average of eight years and as many as 20 years or more.

Alzheimer's sufferers may experience difficulty performing familiar tasks, disorientation, mood changes and loss of initiative.

Scientists are not certain what causes Alzheimer's disease and there is no known cure. However, early diagnosis is an important factor in receiving appropriate treatment, care and support services.

Visit a family physician to learn more about Alzheimer's disease, treatment and early detection.

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians is a statewide professional association with more than 4,400 members, including practicing physicians, family medicine residents and medical students. The scope of family medicine encompasses all ages, both sexes and every disease entity. Family physicians provide comprehensive, continuing care to all members of the family.



FACT SHEET

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10 Warning Signs for Alzheimer's Disease

1. Memory loss. One of the most common, early signs of Alzheimer's disease is forgetting recently learned information.
2. Difficulty performing familiar tasks. People with Alzheimer's often find it hard to complete everyday tasks.
3. Problems with language. A person with Alzheimer's disease may forget simple words or substitute inappropriate words, making sentences difficult to understand.
4. Disorientation to time and place. People with Alzheimer's disease can become lost on their own streets, forget where they are, how they got there, and how to get back home.
5. Poor or decreased judgment. Alzheimer's patients may dress without regard to the weather, show poor judgment about money by paying for home repairs or products they do not need.
6. Problems with abstract thinking. Recognizing numbers or performing basic calculations may become difficult.
7. Misplacing things. A person with Alzheimer's disease may put things in unusual places—such as an iron in the freezer or sandwich under the sofa.
8. Changes in mood or behavior. Someone with Alzheimer's disease can show rapid mood swings—from calm to tears to anger—for no apparent reason.
9. Changes in personality. A person with Alzheimer's can experience dramatic personality changes, either suddenly or over a period of time.
10. Loss of initiative. With Alzheimer's disease individuals may become uninterested and uninvolved in many or all of his usual pursuits.

Source: Alzheimer's Association/Related Disorders Association, Inc.