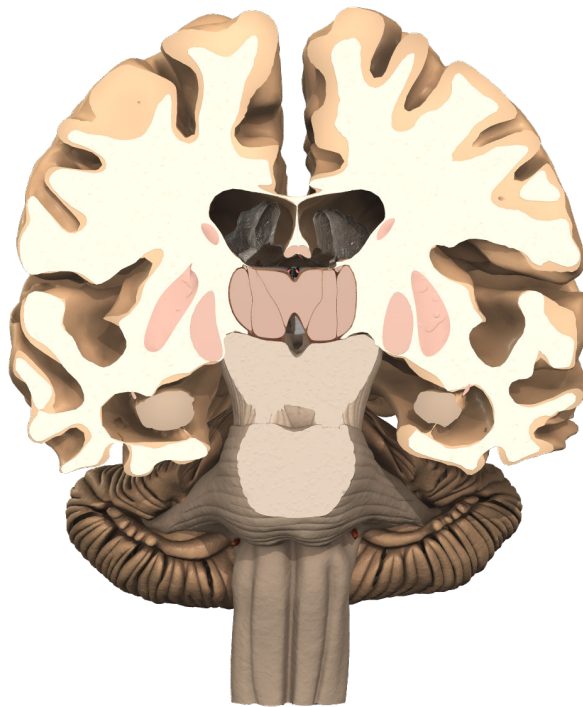


Patient Education

Alzheimer's disease

What are the symptoms?



The symptoms of Alzheimer's disease worsen over time. Additional symptoms may appear in the advanced stages due to a gradual decline in brain function. This gradual decline differentiates Alzheimer's disease from vascular dementia, which is the second most prevalent type of dementia.

The common symptoms include:



Progressive
memory loss

Progressive memory loss may occur as a result of a continuous build-up of β -amyloid plaques and neurofibrillary tangles in the hippocampus, an area in the brain responsible for learning and memory.



Cognitive
impairment

Cognitive impairment can occur as a result of damage and atrophy to cells in the brain, particularly in the hippocampus. Patients may show a difficulty in making judgements and display increased confusion.



Mental health
problems

Alzheimer's disease patients often suffer from depression and mood swings. Depression commonly manifests as unresponsiveness and withdrawal from social interaction. Aggression is also common in those with Alzheimer's disease.



Motor
dysfunction

Motor dysfunction, including the failure to control and coordinate movements can occur as Alzheimer's disease progresses. This can occur when neuronal damage affects the motor cortex of the brain.

The common symptoms include:



Dysphagia

Dysphagia is a difficulty in swallowing. This can be caused by the failure of the brain to send signals to control and coordinate the muscles involved in swallowing.



Aphasia

Aphasia is the impairment of speech and language. This is a commonly observed symptom in the moderate and severe stages of Alzheimer's disease.

Aphasia occurs when neuron damage spreads to the Broca's or Wernicke's area, the regions of the brain that are responsible for speech and language comprehension.