

HEALTH AWARENESS BENEFITS

PUTNAM COUNTY HOSPITAL



*“Taking Care Of Families
For Generations To Come”*

1542 S. Bloomington St., Greencastle, IN 46135

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Caring for someone with Alzheimer's Disease?

Join Other Caretakers to Help You
Navigate the Uncertain Waters

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disease that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills, and eventually even the ability to carry out the simplest tasks. In most cases of Alzheimer's, symptoms first appear after age 60, however, some develop the disease in their 30s and 40s.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia among older people. Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning—thinking, remembering, and reasoning—to such an extent that it interferes with a person's daily life and activities. Estimates vary, but experts suggest that as many 1 in 10 Americans over age 65 may have Alzheimer's.

Caring for a family member who suffers from Alzheimer's disease can be a large strain on the family. You may need to assist your relative in doing even the most trivial things such as cooking and cleaning. It may be necessary to care for them in your home or move them into an assisted living facility. Many families find that making decisions on behalf of their relative is very difficult.

Things to consider when caring for a family member who suffers for Alzheimer's disease include:

- Adjusting your communication style to the patient's changing needs as the disease progresses. Some Alzheimer's patients go through a period of denial and can become violent and aggressive.
- Encourage family and friends to visit; the contact is valuable to the patient.
- Establishing routines in activities of daily living
- Maintaining social contacts and fun
- Setting up a safe home environment
- Watching for forms of elder abuse which may include: physical, mental, or financial abuse
- Considering placement in a facility, if care giving becomes unmanageable at home

If you find that you are facing the strains that come with caring for a family member with Alzheimer's disease, you are not alone. Seek support among friends and other family members. There are also support groups available in the community.

Join the Alzheimer's Support Group
Meets the Second Thursday of every month
at 4:00 p.m. in the hospital classroom.
Contact Dean Shugars at 653-4944
for more information



This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health-care provider. If you have any questions about the disease described above, consult a health-care provider.

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