Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is a breaking down of the brain that sometimes happens with aging. It often affects memory, thinking, and speaking. It also affects how you get along with people and job performance. Often the changes come on slowly and are not very noticeable. The changes may be silent and hidden for a long time, even from family and friends. Mood and personality changes often cause the family to seek medical care.

CAUSES

Alzheimer's disease is the leading cause of dementia. Dementia is a reduced ability of the working of the brain. Alzheimer's is one type of dementia and is caused by small changes in the brain. There are many causes of Alzheimer's disease.

DIAGNOSIS

There are no specific tests for Alzheimer's disease, other than doing a biopsy (*tissue sample*) of the brain. This is not usually done. Physical examination and history often provide the best clues for a diagnosis. Often the diagnosis may be made over time, with more observation.

TREATMENT

There is no specific treatment for Alzheimer's disease. Your caregivers will discuss the particular problems you are dealing with or may deal with. They can help direct you to other caregivers who can help in the care of Alzheimer's patients.

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