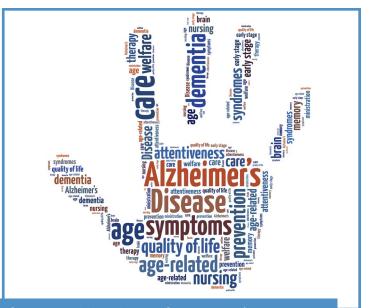
Are you at risk for Alzheimer's disease?



The 21st of September is World Alzheimer's Day and the theme for 2015 is 'Remember me'. Under this theme, people are encouraged to be aware of the early signs of dementia and they are also urged to remember those currently suffering from the condition and loved ones who have passed away as a result of the condition.

What is Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's disease is responsible for 60-80% of the cases of dementia, which is the general term used to describe diseases that cause deterioration of specific intellectual capabilities including language, learning, and memory.

Alzheimer's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder, which over time causes progressive brain cell death in the individual and leads to problems with normal brain function.

The exact cause of Alzheimer's is yet to be established but there are certain factors that put people at greater risk of developing this condition.

Who is at risk?

- Age: Anyone over the age of 65 is at risk for this condition. However, early-onset Alzheimer's is a rare form of the condition that can develop in individuals in their 30s or 40s.
- Gender: While the exact reason is still unclear, more women develop Alzheimer's than men. Studies attribute this increased risk to the increased longevity of women.

- Family history: There is a hereditary component to this condition, so an individual with an immediate family member (parent or sibling) with the condition is at a higher risk of developing the condition.
- Head injuries: Individuals who have had previous head injuries are also more likely to develop Alzheimer's.

Health and lifestyle

Increasingly, science is starting to show a link between heart health and brain health, particularly when it comes to conditions like Alzheimer's. Therefore, people with high cholesterol and high blood pressure have been found to be more likely to develop the condition. Research has also found that diabetes increases the risk of Alzheimer's by 50%.

Treatment

The symptoms of Alzheimer's can be treated with medication. Consult your doctor for more information about the best treatment plan for you. While there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, getting treatment early can help to slow down progression of the condition.

