

Alzheimer's Aid Society

OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

“THE BLUE BOOK”

2013 Edition



A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVERS

Our Mission:

We exist to provide support, education and compassion to patients and caregivers throughout the journey of Alzheimer's Disease, to support medical research, and to promote public awareness.

*The Alzheimer's Aid Society of Northern California is a
Non-Profit, Tax-Deductible 501(c)(3) corporation*

Federal ID Number: 94-2721961

Alzheimer's Aid Society

OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



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Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's Disease was first discovered in 1906 by a German doctor named Alois Alzheimer. It is a disorder of the brain, causing damage to brain tissue over a period of time. Alzheimer's accounts for more than half of all organically caused memory loss. Age is the greatest risk factor. Alzheimer's affects almost 50% of all persons over age 85. At present, the cause of Alzheimer's is not fully understood, and researchers strive to find a cure. The disease progresses for up to twenty-five years before death.

The disease develops very slowly with primary symptoms of short-term memory loss and mild disorientation. These symptoms worsen over time. As the disease progresses, additional cognitive problems appear and behavioral or personality changes are often present.

The Importance of Early Diagnosis

Alzheimer's is diagnosed by testing for, and excluding, other conditions that can cause similar symptoms. It is an essential process, since some of these conditions can be treated or cured. If the final diagnosis is indeed Alzheimer's, then there are important steps to be taken. Medications can give the patient valuable years of independence and improve quality of life.

Early Symptoms Of Alzheimer's Disease

Problems with Recent Memory

Forgetfulness that is interfering with day to day independence and the quality of life.

Disorientation of Time and Place

Losing sense of time passing, becoming confused in familiar settings, getting lost when driving.

Difficulty Performing Familiar Tasks

Problems in completing all the steps in a common task such as setting the table or any multi-step task. Difficulty balancing a check book or maintaining organization.

Problems With Language

Struggling to find common words, especially nouns. Losing train of thought in conversation.

Possible Changes in Mood, Personality, and Initiative

Withdrawing from social situations, inflexibility, frustration or anger, mood changes.

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DESCRIPTIONS OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Compiled by Cynda Rennie

Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.com/health/alzheimers

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia — the loss of intellectual and social abilities severe enough to interfere with daily functioning. In Alzheimer's disease, healthy brain tissue degenerates, causing a steady decline in memory and mental abilities.

Alzheimer's disease is not a part of normal aging, but the risk of the disorder increases with age. About 5 percent of people between the ages of 65 and 74 have Alzheimer's disease, while nearly half the people over the age of 85 have Alzheimer's.

Although there's no cure, treatments may improve the quality of life for people with Alzheimer's disease. Those with Alzheimer's — as well as those who care for them — need support and affection from friends and family in order to cope.

UCDavis Alzheimer's Disease Center

www.ucdmc.edu/alzheimers

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, irreversible neurological disorder that attacks the brain and results in memory loss, confusion, impaired judgment, and personality changes. It is the most common cause of severe intellectual impairment in older individuals and is a primary reason for the placement of the elderly in nursing homes.

More than 5,000,000 Californians are affected by this illness. At present it is not known what causes Alzheimer's disease or how to prevent or cure it. However, there is often much that can be done to reduce the symptoms, improve functioning, and aid the family in caring for the patient at home.

Harvard University Medical Center

www.neurodiscovery.harvard.edu

AD symptoms develop because brain cells (neurons) are decimated. Why are neurons dying? Part of the answer lies in brain changes observed in Alzheimer's patients, including the characteristic "plaques" and "tangles." Plaques are dense and toxic clumps of proteins that collect around neurons. Tangles occur when fibers inside neurons become twisted, also causing neurons to die.

Precisely why plaques and tangles develop or why some individuals but not others are predisposed to AD are largely unanswered questions. There are no cures for AD.

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WHAT IS SENILE DEMENTIA?

Cynda Rennie, Resource Specialist

The word, **Senile**, is taken from the Latin “sen,” which means “old.” In medical terminology this usually refers to a person’s age being over 65. The word, “senile,” is an adjective usually linked to the word, “dementia.”

The word, **Dementia**, is taken from the Latin, “de,” which means “away,” and “mentia” which means, “mind.”

Dementia is defined as a group of symptoms including:

Memory loss and forgetfulness

Changes in language or problem-solving abilities

Disorientation

Possible personality changes

The existing symptoms have not been present since birth and do not relate to level of consciousness.

The existing symptoms are severe enough to interfere with the person’s ability to function independently.

Pre-senile Dementia refers to a presentation of these symptoms in a person below the age of 65.

Causes of dementia include:

Alzheimer’s Disease

Lewy Body Disease

Pick’s Disease

Huntington's Disease

Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease

Parkinson’s

Brain Tumor

Head Trauma

Hydrocephalus

Multiple Sclerosis

Prolonged Abuse of Alcohol or other Drugs

Vitamin Deficiency : thiamin, niacin, B12

Hypothyroidism

Hypercalcemia

Vascular Dementia

Some of these conditions can be treated or reversed. Please see page 8 for more information about medical evaluation.



REFERENCES: The Farlex Medical Dictionary 2010; Miriam Webster Dictionary www.miriamwebster.com; UC Davis Alzheimer's Disease Center www.alzheimer.ucdavis.edu

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ABOUT THE “BLUE BOOK” CONTRIBUTORS

The Authors Who Have Donated Their Valuable Words and Advice

Max Perry, JD

Max Perry has been actively involved with senior issues since 1993 when he helped to found Respect Your Elders®, a senior referral resource for the greater Sacramento area. Prior to being asked to sit as one of the Directors for The Alzheimer's Aid Society, Max helped organize Adopt an Elder, a non-profit entity founded to assist indigent seniors with their costs of activities of daily living.

Max graduated from Chico State College with a B.A. in Political Science and later received a J.D. degree from Lincoln Law School in Sacramento, with two achievement awards for American Jurisprudence. Max has worked for local area attorneys. He brings to our seminars his many hours of experience regarding senior legal issues, including conservatorships, probates, trusts, wills, powers of attorney, advanced healthcare directives and other related topics.

Arturo Benavidez, ESQ

Arturo Benavidez has been practicing law in the Sacramento area since 2006. Arturo Benavidez runs a small general-practice law firm in downtown Sacramento. He has litigated in probate matters in various counties across Northern California including Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Yolo and Butte.

Art Benavidez graduated from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University in 2005. He is a dedicated attorney with a strong work ethic. Mr. Benavidez is a community oriented attorney with an emphasis on his clients. He currently lives with his wife and two small children in the Sacramento area.

William J. Walker, ESQ

William J. Walker is a California licensed attorney, who has handled criminal, civil and estate cases. Currently William's practice has focused on elder abuse, conservatorships and probate cases. William has volunteered a portion of his time to the Alzheimer's Aid Society, and has been a speaker at our conferences.

Prior to becoming an attorney, William had a career in general contracting and real estate development. Other interests include photography and writing, with some publication credits. William has two adult children who grew up in Sacramento, and now live in Portland and Brooklyn.

Cynthia Wilson MA, AT, MFTI

Cynthia Wilson MA, AT, MFTI received her Marriage and Family Therapy Masters Degree with an Art Therapy Certificate from Notre Dame de Namur University, her Psychology Bachelors of Art Degree from Sonoma State University with a Gerontology Minor and Certificate and Art Minor from Sonoma State University. Cynthia has Eight years' experience working with adults, older adults, caregivers and families in Art Therapy groups or individual settings.

MaryLee Moritz, RN, BA, MA

MaryLee Moritz received her nursing degree in 1961 from the University of North Dakota. She established the first female health counseling program at the University of Nebraska in 1970. In the 90's she returned to school at UCD, earning a Bachelor's degree in Art then a Master's degree in Art History. She has been a docent at the Crocker Art Museum since 1999.

When MaryLee's mother began her descent into Alzheimer's, the Alzheimer's Aid Society provided education and support. MaryLee has been a Peer Counselor for the Society since 2003.

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Barbara Gillogly, PhD., LMFT, CPG

Dr. Gillogly has been the Chair of the Gerontology Department at American River College for the past 20 years. This program has been awarded the designation of Program of Merit by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education in Washington, DC. American River College is one of only nine colleges and universities in the U.S. awarded this designation.

Dr. Gillogly also maintains a private therapy practice working with people of all ages, but especially with seniors and their families in challenges of aging within the family. She has both a BA and MA in psychology from CSUS and a Ph.D. in Human Development with an emphasis on aging from U.C. Davis.

Dr. Gillogly wrote The New Nursing Assistant 2000, a textbook published by Medcom, Inc. and widely used in C.N.A. training programs.

She facilitates educational support groups and is a member of the Advisory Boards for the UCD Center for Healthy Aging, CSUS Gerontology Program, UCD Extension Services, California Council on Gerontology and Geriatrics, and the National Association for Professional Gerontologists. In 2005 she was invited to participate with 33 other leaders in the field of aging in a week-long discussion of aging issues at Oxford University in England. She has taught at American River College, CSUS, and UC Davis in gerontology, psychology, and human development.

Kelly Rogers

Kelly Rogers is a certified gerontologist with experience in operating an In-Home-Care Agency. Kelly gained much insight over the years in understanding the needs of both patients and caregivers. Kelly has overseen the in-home care plans of hundreds of patients.

Clara Jackson, RN

Clara Jackson is the VP of Medical Information on the Board of Directors for the Alzheimer's Aid Society. She has been a registered nurse since 1959. She has volunteered her time and expertise to the AASNC for over 30 years. Clara and her family coped with her mother's Alzheimer's in the early 1980's when community support and knowledge were nearly non-existent. In 1982 Clara began attending the only support group for caregivers in Sacramento. It was offered by the Alzheimer's Aid Society. Clara has been instrumental in the expansion of services offered by the Alzheimer's Aid Society of Northern California.

Margie Eisenhower

Margie Eisenhower was involved with the Alzheimer's Aid Society from 1991 to 2012. Margie and her family did everything they could to ease her mother's descent into Alzheimer's. Margie stayed on with the Alzheimer's Society after her mother's death. She has been a volunteer, a peer counselor, a board member, and the Sacramento office manager. She is currently retired from these positions.

Cynda Rennie

Cynda Rennie has been a resource specialist in the Sacramento area since 1985, working for Sutter Hospitals and later in private practice, specializing in dementia and Alzheimer's. She is a former licensed administrator for assisted living. Cynda has been involved with the Alzheimer's Society as a resource specialist, a support group facilitator for caregivers and patients, and as a presenter for seminars. Since 2010, she is the Program Director for the Alzheimer's Society and the editor of the newsletter and Blue Book. Cynda has an adult daughter with Down's Syndrome who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease.

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FROM THE "BLUE BOOK" EDITOR

Cynda Rennie

Dear Reader,

The 2013 edition of the "BLUE BOOK" has been a labor of love for everyone at the Alzheimer's Aid Society. Every article was written by a local professional and donated for inclusion in this book. Please be sure to read the biographies of our writers on pages 4 and 5.

At the beginning of every story of dementia or Alzheimer's Disease is fear. The onset of symptoms is insidious with occasional hints of something serious: increased forgetfulness, changes in problem-solving skills, problems with organization. The patient and loved ones often have moments of being fearfully certain something is wrong, followed by days of thinking, "No, everything seems ok now."

Eventually, the diagnosis is made. Now there may be relief mixed with fear. There is an answer to what is wrong. There is a name for what is happening. Step one is to learn about the disease. Contact an agency near you, such as the Alzheimer's Aid Society, where you can talk with someone knowledgeable to help you navigate this new journey. Ask your physician to explain medications which may improve memory and slow the symptoms. Join a support group. Read this "BLUE BOOK" and other books. Truly, fear can be replaced by a sense of purpose. Please be aware that, although this book explains many behavioral problems which can arise with Alzheimer's Disease, many patients have only a few of these issues.

Just as every person is an individual, every patient and every caregiver will have an individual journey ahead. It is our hope that the pages in this book provide practical information which can be adapted to an individual caregiving journey.

Warmest Regards,
Cynda Rennie

Do you wish to copy pages from this book?

To use or disseminate any article in this "BLUE BOOK" in any manner (such as handouts for a support group, caregiving classes, etc.) you are welcome to copy any of the pages from this "BLUE BOOK" provided each page is used in its entirety with the top and bottom banners giving credit to the Author and to the Alzheimer's Aid Society of Northern California.

To better serve you, we would be delighted to know how this book is being put to good use! In duplicating any "BLUE BOOK" pages, we would be grateful to hear which articles are used and for what purpose. Please send a brief email to: info@AlzAid.org

For permission to place or quote any article or portion of this "BLUE BOOK" in another publication, please contact the Alzheimer's Aid Society at 1-916-483-2002. Thank you.

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Visit our Office.

Browse through our educational material and meet with a peer counselor. There are hand outs on many of the subjects in this blue book as well as other topics. There is a lending library. All of these services are free of charge.

Sacramento Area Office
2641 Cottage Way, #4
Sacramento, CA. 95825
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Toll Free: 800-540-3340

Phone us.

A peer counselor or resource specialist is available to talk with you. We will mail an information packet to you. These services are free of charge.

Attend a Support Group.

The Alzheimer's Aid Society offers caregiver support groups throughout Northern California. Support groups for persons with memory loss are offered in several sites. Phone us or visit our website to locate a group near you.

Sign up to receive our bi-monthly newsletter, either by mail or electroni- cally via email.

Learn about up-coming events and new support group listings. Read an array of articles dealing with the stress of caregiving, understanding dementia, and other helpful information. We do not charge a membership fee or subscription fee for our mailed materials.

Attend a Mini-Seminar.

These are held throughout the year in a variety of locations in the northern state. Mini-seminars are usually held on Saturdays and feature two to three topics and speakers. They are free of charge.

Attend our Annual Conference.

An annual conference is held in Sacramento. There are many speakers and break-out sessions so you can customize your learning experience. There is a modest fee for our annual conferences. Lunch is included.



Make an Appointment for Legal Help

Ulric N. Duverney, Attorney at Law donates one day per month to the Alzheimer's Aid Society to provide legal counseling free of charge.

Visit our website.

www.AlzAid.org

You can find past issues of our newsletter and links to our office websites. Learn about events. See support group listings. Contact us via email at:

info@AlzAid.org

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Thousands of these "BLUE BOOKS" are distributed annually, without charge, to new callers, support groups, health fairs, health agencies and Alzheimer's programs.



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The printing of the "BLUE BOOK"
is done by the
A. Warren McClaskey Adult Center,
which offers job training and employment
to developmentally disabled workers
in the Sacramento area.
Their reasonable rates
and excellent service allow us to make
maximum use of donated funds.

Can You Help?

Your tax-deductible donation of **just \$10.00** will cover the cost to print and distribute three "BLUE BOOKS" to caregivers right here in your community.

Your tax-deductible donation in **any amount** will assist in maintaining and expanding services in Northern California such as support groups, peer counseling, seminars, newsletters, respite care, and more.

Please use the donation envelope in the center section of this book or mail your donation to:

Alzheimer's Aid Society of Northern California
P.O. Box 60095
Sacramento, CA. 95860



Every donation, in any amount, provides help LOCALLY!
THANK YOU!