

# Natural Help 4...

# Alzheimer's Disease



## What is Alzheimer's Disease?

Alzheimer's disease (or Alzheimer's syndrome) is the **most common form of dementia**.

Dementia is a group of brain disorders that **gradually destroys brain cells and impairs the ability to function** effectively in daily life. **Cognitive functioning is slowly affected** (memory, reason, judgment, and communication), making it increasingly difficult to carry out daily tasks and activities.

**Personality can be also be affected** by Alzheimer's, and behaviors may begin to change as the disease progresses. Characteristically, **symptoms of Alzheimer's disease** include becoming **anxious, suspicious, or agitated**.

In its most severe form, people with Alzheimer's often reach the stage where they are **unable to respond appropriately to their environment** and are unable to speak and control their movements.

Because Alzheimer's disease affects approximately **10% percent of people over 65** and nearly **50% of people over 85 years of age**, this form of dementia continues to be the focus of a great deal of research.

## Diagnosing Alzheimer's Disease

There is **no single lab test that can confirm the presence of Alzheimer's disease**, therefore the process of assessing a potential Alzheimer's patient can sometimes be a fairly lengthy one.

**A complete medical checkup** is often administered (including blood tests) to rule out other causes of dementia like thyroid problems, vitamin deficiencies, or mini-strokes - all of which can **cause symptoms similar to Alzheimer's**.

It may be necessary to provide the doctor with **a detailed medical history**, noting both past and present medical problems, as well as whether anyone in the family has ever been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or exhibits behaviors similar to those of **Alzheimer's symptoms**.

Another important step in diagnosing the disease is noting when the **Alzheimer's symptoms** began, their frequency, and progression. Keeping notes is a good idea if possible, because the doctor may also want to know **specific details like dates and times**.

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In some cases, your practitioner may even suggest a brain scan such as a CT scan or MRI to check for any signs of a stroke or structural brain abnormality.

## Recognizing the Symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease

It is normal to forget the occasional detail - the name of someone that you rarely see, the exact place you left the car keys, or trying to find your sunglasses-- only to realize they are sitting on your head!

This **mild memory loss** is a normal part of aging, and happens in varying degrees to most of us. However, while the brain naturally deteriorates with age, Alzheimer's is associated with the **rapid onset of brain degeneration**.

**Severe memory loss** and cognitive impairment associated with Alzheimer's should not be ignored or trivialized.

The following are **common symptoms of Alzheimer's disease**:

**Memory and learning impairment** – People with Alzheimer's start out with slight memory loss and often have difficulty learning new tasks or information. **As their memory loss progresses**, they will begin to forget more important details and old facts, and will often repeat conversations, having forgotten what they've just said. Sometimes they will fill in the gaps by making up stories (confabulation). They may begin to forget what they were doing mid-task or forget where they are, causing them to frequently feel lost in familiar surroundings. This can be extremely traumatic.

**Difficulties with language** – Language is often affected, as the individual struggles to find the right word or express thoughts in words. It may be difficult to follow conversations, and eventually writing and reading are also affected.

**Motor difficulties** – A person with Alzheimer's may struggle with motor activities such as coordination.

**Difficulty recognizing common objects or familiar items or people** – This is a common symptom, and is very distressing for both the diagnosed and their loved ones.

**Disturbance in executive functioning** – This is the part of our minds that allows us to follow actions through in an orderly and logical way. People with Alzheimer's will often struggle to plan and organize even simple tasks. **Day-to-day functioning becomes extremely difficult and eventually impossible**, as even the simple sequence of events necessary for a bath becomes confusing. Cooking, driving, cleaning, and dressing become tasks that they can no longer carry out. Judgment becomes impaired, and when faced with a problem like an overflowing pot, a person with Alzheimer's can find themselves without the skills to correct it.

**Difficulty with abstract thinking** – People with Alzheimer's struggle to perform abstract tasks and often can no longer do even simple math problems or work with numbers.

**Changes in personality** – It is fairly common to notice personality changes in



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### **Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist**



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

those with Alzheimer's. They may experience mood swings, irritability, and act in ways that are uncharacteristic of their normal behavior.

## What Causes Alzheimer's Disease?

The exact **cause of Alzheimer's disease is not yet known**; however, certain factors tend to place a percentage of people at higher risk than others.

If you are concerned about loss of memory loss or cognitive skills and feelings of disorientation, you should seek further assessment from a health care practitioner. Sometimes, [dementia](#) may be present because of thyroid problems, depression, or other treatable medical conditions. Measures can also be taken in [preventing Alzheimer's](#).

If Alzheimer's is confirmed, an early diagnosis is beneficial - giving the individual and their family adequate time to explore treatment options and a maintenance plan. **Early treatment may also relieve [Alzheimer's symptoms](#) and slow down the degenerative process.**

## High Risk Factors for Alzheimer's Disease

**Age** – Alzheimer's is a disease that affects the elderly. While there are cases of Alzheimer's developing in people under the age of 40, this is incredibly rare, as most people diagnosed are over 65. After age 65, every passing year doubles the chance of Alzheimer's. After age 85, the risk is as high as nearly 50%.

**Genetics** – Research has shown that the disease may be genetic, as chances of developing Alzheimer's are greater for those with diagnosed family members.

**Sex** – Alzheimer's tends to affect more women than men, although this is partly due to the fact that women tend to live longer.

**Lifestyle** – An unhealthy lifestyle could increase your chances of developing Alzheimer's. Constant high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart-problems, excessive weight, smoking, and excessive alcohol intake can compromise the brain's effectiveness, thus increasing the risk of Alzheimer's.

**Head-injury** – Studies have shown that there is a link between head-injuries and the future development of Alzheimer's (especially head injuries that involve a prolonged loss of consciousness and concussion).

**Education levels** – Some studies reveal that people who attained a lower level of education are more likely to develop Alzheimer's. This may be due to the fact that as you learn, your brain produces more mental 'pathways' and makes connections that last a lifetime. This constant 'upkeep' of the brain may keep mental health problems at bay.

## Help for Alzheimer's Disease

There is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease. However, there are a number of **treatment options available to improve quality of life**, slow down the progression of the disease, **relieve [Alzheimer's symptoms](#)**, and **help in**

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## preventing Alzheimer's.

Most **symptoms of Alzheimer's disease** can be treated successfully using a combination of the available treatment methods.

Often people are not aware that treatment options other than traditional drug therapy are available. **Alternative treatments, including natural remedies, can offer a safe and effective treatment approach.**

These alternative treatments are free of chemicals, propose a much lower risk of side effects, and can be safely incorporated into the broader treatment plan.

## **Drug Therapy for Alzheimer's Disease**

Two types of medications have been shown to slow the cognitive decline related with Alzheimer's. Cholinesterase inhibitors work by increasing the levels of neurotransmitters in the brain, thus slowing the onset of Alzheimer's in people with declining cognitive capacity.

These drugs don't work for about half of those who take them, and the side effects can be severe, including diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting.

Memantine (Namenda) was developed to help protect the brain cells against damage caused by Alzheimer's, although this drug's use is often discontinued due to side effects such as delusions, agitation, and dizziness. Other medications that may be prescribed include those used to treat anxiety and depression.

It is strongly advised that you thoroughly research any prescription medication and its side effects before agreeing to drug therapy.

## **Treating Alzheimer's Disease Naturally**

There are numerous **natural remedies that have been shown to decrease memory loss and improve cognitive functioning.** A substantial benefit of a natural approach is that it offers the curative properties of conventional medicine **without any of the side effects** (which are often more debilitating than the disorder itself).

Some examples of natural herbs recommended for **relieving Alzheimer's symptoms** include Ginkgo biloba, Rosemary, and Sage. Taken regularly, these herbs have been clinically shown to **improve memory and cerebral blood flow to the brain**, thus helping the brain to perform its functions while reducing the **symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease.**

While there is a place for **prescription medication** in certain cases of Alzheimer's disease, **careful consideration and caution should be taken** regarding possible side effects.

There are also alternative treatment options available for treating adults with hyperactivity. Making **simple changes in diet, sleep, exercise, and routine** can help in **preventing Alzheimer's.**



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Even trying more involved approaches like incorporating relaxation therapies-- ranging from guided imagery, meditation techniques, and yoga-- can be beneficial.

There are also many herbal and homeopathic remedies that can help **maintain harmony, health, and systemic balance in the brain and nervous system**, without side effects or sedation. These products are known for their supportive function in maintaining brain, nervous system and circulatory health, and well-being.

## Preventing Alzheimer's Disease

**Live a healthy lifestyle.** Get plenty of exercise, sleep, and eat a well-balanced diet. Stress management is also a fundamental aspect, and will help prevent Alzheimer's.

**Take care of your heart.** An unhealthy heart means less efficient blood flow to the brain. Take steps to improve the health of your heart by losing weight, lowering cholesterol, doing cardiovascular exercise and practicing relaxation techniques.

**Keep an active mind**, as this will delay the onset of Alzheimer's.

**Use natural products** that contain vitamin E and Ginkgo, as these have both been proven to improve cognitive ability.

## Tips for coping with Alzheimer's Disease

A diagnosis of **Alzheimer's does not mean your life is over**. You can still live a happy life, but you may need to make a few changes and accept some things will just be different.

**Live a healthy lifestyle** by eating a balanced diet, exercising, and getting enough rest. This will help your brain to function at its best.

Take steps to **look after your emotional well-being** by seeing a counselor, joining a support group, or starting a journal. You will probably experience a range of difficult thoughts and emotions as you come to terms with your diagnosis - denial, anger, frustration, depression. It is important to acknowledge and deal with these emotions.

**Tell your friends and family** and let them know how and when to help. Remember that this will be a big change for them too, and so they need to **know what to expect**.

Keep **doing activities that you enjoy** and adjust them to your changing abilities.

**Ask for help** When things become difficult, arrange for someone to help you. Try doing difficult activities during the time of day that you feel most alert.

**Organize and write things down** You will need constant little reminders, so create systems as early as possible to help you remember things: a schedule, a day planner, alarm clocks, and arranging your living environment in an organized manner

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## Tips for Concerned Family Members

**Learn all you can about Alzheimer's.** If you are well-prepared and know what to expect, you will be **able to cope better** with the challenges that may arise, and will **be of more assistance** to the person with Alzheimer's.

**Prioritize.** Due to the degenerative aspect of Alzheimer's disease, it may be a good idea to give certain issues preference while your loved one is still able to make important decisions.

**Show understanding.** When talking to the individual with Alzheimer's, it is important to **be sensitive** to their condition, and never insult and or criticize them for their memory loss or other symptoms.

**Speak clearly.** Allow those suffering from Alzheimer's enough time to keep up with conversations by using simple words and short sentences.

**Encourage serenity.** Ensure that their environment is **quiet and peaceful** by eliminating as much chaos as you can.

**Look after your own needs, too.** You are more likely to be able to care for your family member if you care for yourself as well.

## The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that only a few decades ago, **homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used** even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is 'better' than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned upon by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, **natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed** by conventional doctors, and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the **body has an innate capacity to heal itself**. While natural medicines are often called



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‘alternative’ or ‘complimentary’ medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term ‘holistic’ medicine is more apt, given the **broad range of treatment options and approaches** that are to be found within the practice of natural medicine. Holistic medicine encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to **support health, relieve symptoms, and prevent future disease**. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "...more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which **strives to support health** (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer. In many cases, **holistic medicine can accomplish just as much**, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction, and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs.

Contrary to common perception-- and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way-- **natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing**. In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are ‘unproven’ and ‘untested’, the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a **long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety**. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that like any medicine, **herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way**, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately, not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called ‘standardized’ extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While ‘standardized’ extracts may offer the benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper production lines), they have grave disadvantages, including an increase in side effects-- as the **medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties** of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the **Full Spectrum Method of**

**extraction**, which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a **more complete treatment** as well as **superior protection against side effects**.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. **Research what is best for you**. If you have a chronic or life-threatening condition, don't make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will **support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health**.

## **Related Natural Remedies:**

**MemoRise**: Supports healthy cognitive functioning including memory, concentration, and attention span.

MemoRise is a 100% safe, non-addictive, herbal remedy for natural memory enhancement. Formulated by a clinical psychologist specifically for middle-aged adults or seniors, MemoRise can be used to **safely maintain health and systemic balance** in the brain and nervous system, without harmful side effects or stimulants.

MemoRise contains a selection of herbs known for their supportive function in **maintaining brain, nervous system, circulatory health, and well-being**. The formula remains true to the full spectrum method of herbal extraction, ensuring the bioavailability and balance of all the active ingredients contained in the remedy.

This method of manufacturing also significantly reduces the likelihood of side effects and ensures that all active ingredients are in perfect balance – exactly as nature intended.

In combination with a healthy lifestyle, diet, and other memory techniques, MemoRise supports the healthy functioning of the brain and nervous system, thereby helping to **maintain memory and optimum performance**. MemoRise provides support for routine information processing and retrieval, improved memory techniques, and helps reduce the common forgetfulness associated with an aging brain. MemoRise can be used consistently, without compromising health or risk of serious side effects.

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**Brain Tonic**: Aids in cognitive processes including concentration, memory and attentiveness.

Triple Complex Brain Tonic is a **combination of three cellular-supporting biochemic tissue salts** selected for their effect on brain and nervous system health.

This combination of tissue salts can be used regularly to promote **systemic balance in the brain and nervous system**, as well as in conjunction with other remedies to maintain therapeutic effectiveness.

Tissue salts, also called cell salts or biochemic salts, are composed of **minerals**

**that occur naturally at a cellular level** in our bodies and all organic matter on earth (plants, rocks, and soil).

There have been twelve essential tissue salts identified as important components of all body cells. Without these components, true health is not possible. Each tissue salt plays a different yet vital role in **maintaining cellular health in the organs and systems** of the body.

Ensuring the healthy functioning of all brain and nervous system cells **enhances the bioavailability of supplements, remedies, and even nutrients** in your diet.

Brain Tonic **maximizes all health efforts of the brain**, in addition to herbs and vitamins that [promote mental focus](#) in diet alone. And, because our tissue salts are naturally occurring in the body and manufactured to ensure safe yet optimum potency, they are safe to use for all ages, as well as during pregnancy.

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**PureCalm:** Aids nervous system in stress resistance for balanced moods and feelings of well-being.

PureCalm is a 100% safe, non-addictive herbal remedy that has been specially formulated by a Clinical Psychologist for adults and children.

PureCalm can be used to **safely maintain harmony, health and systemic balance in the brain and nervous system**, without harmful side effects and without sedatives. This remedy contains a selection of herbs known for their supportive function in maintaining brain.

PureCalm can especially benefit those individuals needing support overcoming worry, managing stress, and promoting inner calm related to certain situations. Natural stress relief products such as PureCalm can be used consistently, without side effects or compromising health.

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