

THE GUIDED LIGHT

LA CROSSE COUNTY'S DEMENTIA NEWSLETTER FOR HOPE,
SUPPORT, AND RESOURCES

"Is it Dementia? First Steps to Support"



THE AFTERGLOW OF THE HOLIDAYS

After the fun, the gifts, and the feasts have passed— many families arrive at some startling discoveries about their aging parents or relatives post-Holiday festivities.

Mom missed an ingredient in her favorite dessert.

Aunt Jo withdrew to her room after 20 minutes of gathering.

Cousin Freddy kept checking the blinds for "those sneaky neighbors"

The first signs of dementia and Alzheimer's disease can be hard to see. Doctors can miss them during brief checkups. Memory tests can be wrong. Spouses can be blind to the gradual decline. Children and siblings can move away and lose contact. The person themselves may not notice or be in denial of what may be happening. There's no time, it turns out, like the holidays for these signs and symptoms to emerge.

More families will face this dilemma, because more Americans are living to the ages at which Alzheimer's becomes likely. At age 65, 1 out of 10 people are diagnosed with Alzheimer's. At 85, it's 50 percent 1 out of 2. It's a particular reality for La Crosse County, because the average life expectancy is 78 for men and 82 for women.

To encourage getting tested, loved ones can emphasize that memory loss can be caused by treatable conditions (vitamin deficiency or a thyroid problem). While these causes are infrequent, they might give hope to people who fear a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, which is incurable and degenerative. It's also important to not just assume it's Alzheimer's and there's nothing that can be done. Connecting with the Dementia Care Specialist can help you navigate but also check out page 3 for next steps.

For information on the benefits of early detection and steps to discussing with a loved one, visit alz.org/timetotalk

ACTIVITY CORNER

Staying physically active through winter is vital, here are a few opportunities to keep you and your loved one moving!

Brain & Body Fitness

Mondays & Thursdays 11-12pm*

through Jan 31; date changes after, call ADRC for updated schedule

Riverside Corporate Wellness- La Crosse
Registration & Evaluation Required.

For persons with early to mid-stage Dementia/MCI
Call 608-785-5700

Walk with Us Wednesdays!

9:30am Wednesdays

Terry Erickson Boys & Girls Club

1331 Clinton St, La Crosse

Questions? 608-785-5700

Staying Active Class

**through Jan 31; date changes after*

Mondays & Thursdays 9:30-10:30am

Community Connection Center La Crosse

Register for in person: 608-519-2088

Register for virtual link: 608-785-5700

Yoga For All

10:30-11:30am 3rd Saturday/month

La Crosse Public Library

Register: 608-789-7125

Chair Fitness

10-11am Tuesdays

Community Connection Center La Crosse

Register: 608-789-8640

Also Check out:

- [Holmen Community Center Programs](#)
- [Onalaska RW Houser Family YMCA](#)

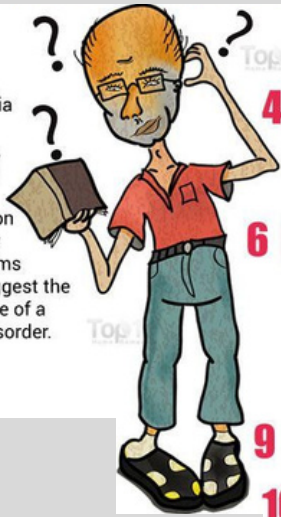


January 2022

Sign up for this newsletter : kflock@lacrossecounty.org

WARNING SIGNS

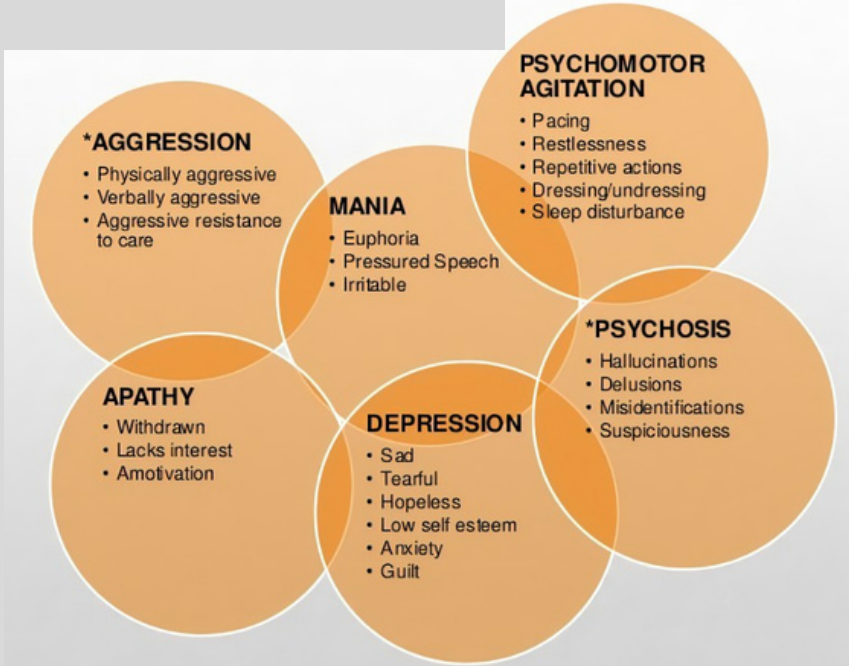
Dementia is not a disease, rather it is a collection of many symptoms that suggest the presence of a brain disorder.



- 1 SUBTLE SHORT-TERM MEMORY LOSS
- 2 DIFFICULTY COMMUNICATING THOUGHTS
- 3 RAPID AGITATION AND MOOD SWINGS
- 4 DISREGARD FOR GROOMING AND PERSONAL HYGIENE
- 5 DIFFICULTY IDENTIFYING HUMOR
- 6 FREQUENT FALLING AND TRIPPING
- 7 LAPSE IN JUDGMENT
- 8 MISPLACING THINGS
- 9 LACK OF INITIATIVE OR APATHY
- 10 GETTING CONFUSED OFTEN

BEHAVIORAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS

Warning signs are really just early symptoms, but Dementia is different for everyone, so here are some common behavioral and psychological symptoms that may present as the disease progresses.



To learn about the various types of dementia, their specific symptoms and treatments, read this pamphlet from the National Institutes of Health: <https://catalog.ninds.nih.gov/pubstatic//17-NS-2252/17-NS-2252.pdf>

Did you know...
It is estimated that nearly 18.6 billion hours of care is provided by caregivers, being valued at nearly 244 billion dollars.

How do we support caregivers?
The La Crosse County Area has many resources available to you to help you and your loved ones on your journey with dementia! The ADRC offers individual help and can connect you with resources for your specific needs. They can also connect you with others who are going through similar experiences with support groups!

Call 608-785-5700



NEXT STEPS IF YOU SUSPECT A LOVED ONE HAS DEMENTIA

Here are five steps to you can take if you suspect a loved one has dementia.

1) Receive a Diagnosis – It is important that if you identify some warning signs in a loved one that you make contact with a medical professional for receiving an official diagnosis, as it may be reversible.

- Schedule a cognitive and physical evaluation with your Primary Care Provider who may refer you onto Mayo Clinic & Gundersen Health Systems who both have Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute diagnostic clinics.

2) Educate yourself and others – Knowledge is power! Educate yourself on dementia, specifically the type your loved one has, to better understand their diagnosis and be able to handle the day-to-day caregiving role but also what to plan for and expect in the future.

- The Aging & Disability Resource of La Crosse County has several pamphlets of education, DVDs and books to check out
- The [ADRC Dementia Resource website](#) has online resources too.

3) Establish a Support System – Trying to care for a loved one with dementia alone can be overwhelming at times. Establishing a support system is essential to ensure your well-being and provide your loved one with the best care.

- Engage in a local or virtual support groups
- Decide how you will tell family/friends and generate a list of tasks you can ask them to do to help

4) Financial and Legal Planning – Cost of care can be overwhelming and knowing ahead of time what to expect can avoid unforeseen surprises

- Incorporate the person with dementias needs and preferences when possible.
- Learn about and establish a Power of Attorney for Healthcare
- Consult with advance care planning and legal professionals
- Call the ADRC to check out future planning resources

5) Create a Caregiving Plan – This will serve as a general outline of medical treatment and in-home/in-community strategies for increasing quality of life for the person with dementia. It may also alleviate caregiver stress as you can reference your plan for areas you may need additional support.

- Create an activity and social engagement calendar with events and activities your loved one can partake in.
- Develop fall prevention and wandering prevention plan
- Create a medicine, cleaning, and meal preparation schedule.

It's never too late to implement anything on this list! Need support? Call the Aging & Disability Resource Center to get started.

FREE CAREGIVER TRAINING
AVAILABLE NOW
FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME



Trualta is a web-based caregiver training that can be tailored to each caregivers' unique caring situation. These interactive trainings prepare and empower caregivers to support their aging loved ones.

Prepare & Support for building skills to help families manage care at home.

<https://wisconsincaregiver.trualta.com/login>

For additional information on steps and resources visit <https://www.alzheimers.net/planning-for-the-future-for-a-loved-one-with-dementia>

UPCOMING SUPPORT & EDUCATION

all programs are free unless noted

January & February March & April

Connect Smart

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 12:30-2:00pm

Jan 12 & 26, Feb 9 & 23, March 9 & 23, April 13 & 27

Community Connections Center - 1407 Saint Andrews Street
To Register: Call 608-519-2088

Fun and engaging creative activities for persons living with dementia. This program offers small group sessions with activities to help people living with dementia maintain physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills, including movement, art and music. Care partner support and education is offered in a separate room during each session.

Club Connectivity

Mondays; 11am-1pm

Jan 10 & 24, Feb 14 & 28, March 14 & 28, April 11 & 25

To Register: Call 608-519-2088

For people who are living with Early Onset Dementia/Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI). The Club will provide a warm, welcoming atmosphere and offer fun, meaningful ways to stay socially connected and active in the community. Registration is required 5 days prior to each session. some programs may have cost.

SPARK!

3rd Wednesday of Month, 10:30am-12:00pm

Jan 19, Feb 16, March 16, & April 20

Clearwater Farm Onalaska | 760 Green Coulee Rd
Registration Required: Call Amber 608-385-4819

A free cultural program that actively engages people living with dementia and their caregivers in their community by stimulating conversation, providing peer support and inspiring creativity.

Dementia Caregiver Education Hour!

Mondays once per month 12:30-2:00pm

March 28- Intimacy & Relationship Changes

April 25- Incontinence Management

Community Connections Center - 1407 Saint Andrews Street

Join us in learning about a variety of caregiving topics, practical tools and resources for family caregivers of people living with dementia. Each session will cover a different topic and the recorded webinar will be streamed for in-person viewing & discussion. The La Crosse County Dementia Care Specialist will be in attendance for current resources and supports available in our community. Topics presented were a partnership with statewide dementia care specialists program and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and hosted in 2021. To register or have Questions? Call 608-785-5700

Brain & Body Fitness Classes (facilitated by PT Students) **February-May SCHEDULE - Call ADRC for info.**

Riverside Corporate Wellness - 333 Front Street N, La Crosse
Exercise that focus on brain and body engagements with cardio, stretching, balance and strength training incorporated. Improve physical fitness and mood by remaining active! Registration & Evaluation Required prior to starting. Enroll anytime. For persons with early to mid-stage Dementia/MCI.

Register adrc@lacrossecounty.org or 608-785-5700

For WI Alzheimer's Association Monthly Education & Support go to: <https://www.alz.org/wi> and scroll to bottom of page.

- **For up-to-date offerings, check out the La Crosse ADRC Calendar:** www.lacrossecounty.org/adrc/calendar.asp?View=MonthlyView&AppID=3
- Find up-to-date listings for virtual caregiver resources and events on the Wisconsin Caregiver website: <http://wisconsin-caregiver.org/virtual-events-for-caregivers>
- Family Caregiver Alliance Virtual Events & Classes: <https://www.caregiver.org/connecting-caregivers/events-classes/>