

# THE GUIDED LIGHT

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

## "What is Dementia?"



### WHAT DOES DEMENTIA LOOK LIKE?

When people think of dementia they often think of Alzheimer's Disease (AD). Even though AD is a form of dementia there are many others types. Dementia is a collection of symptoms that may include: impaired thinking, memory, reasoning, planning, judgment, language, social skills, visual perception, and personality. Dementia is NOT a normal part of aging. Memory changes or other changes can be scary. Understanding the difference between "Normal Aging" and "Not Normal Aging" is the first step in sorting out these changes. If you or a loved one are experiencing changes, reach out to your primary care provider or your local Aging and Disability Resource Center Dementia Care Specialist for more information! Brain Checks are available; free and confidential.

### ACTIVITY CORNER

Looking for a way to keep your loved one with dementia entertained? The La Crosse ADRC has 5 themed caregiver kits (transportation, animals, colors, birds, games) that contain 3 activities geared toward people with dementia for stimulation, fun and enjoyment throughout the day. Free for caregivers to check out. Available at The Aging & Disability Resource Center of La Crosse County 608-785-5700 AND The La Crosse County Libraries (Holmen, West Salem, Bangor, Onalaska, Campbell). Call 608-526-9600.

### CAREGIVER TIP

Caregivers have so many things on their plate. Keeping up with home, work, and caregiving responsibilities can feel overwhelming. Remember that self-care is NOT selfish and is essential for your well-being and for those who you are caring for. Make sure you are getting enough sleep, eating right, and getting in exercise. Schedule them if needed. You may be surprised what good they can do for you! For more caregiver tips go to: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01174.pdf>

# SYMPTOMS, PROGRESSION, & TREATMENT

Dementias typically progress slowly overtime and in three general stages: early, middle and late (sometimes referred to as mild, moderate and severe in a medical context). Since dementia affects people in different ways, each person may experience symptoms – or progress through the stages – differently, especially depending on their specific diagnosis.

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>

## BOOST YOUR BRAIN & MEMORY

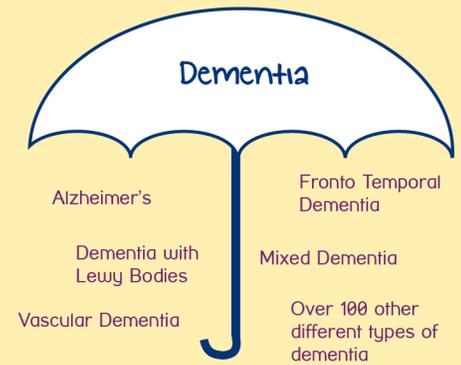
This evidence-based brain health program that goes beyond simple brain games. It focuses on a variety of lifestyle factors that impact brain health, and on memory strategies that participants can implement in their daily lives. Boost Your Brain & Memory offers a unique, whole-person approach to brain fitness. Program participants learn practices that can help them live a healthier lifestyle, remember things better, be more organized, pay closer attention, and regulate their emotions. For information on upcoming sessions call 608-785-5700 or email [adrc@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:adrc@lacrossecounty.org)



**“Dementia does not rob somebody of their dignity, its our reaction to them that does”**  
**-Teepa Snow**

### What is the difference between Alzheimer's and Dementia?

There is no difference. Alzheimer's is a type of dementia and the most common. Dementia is the overall term used to describe over 100 different types of dementia – Alzheimer's is just one type of dementia.



### Did you know...

Alzheimer's is the 6th leading cause of death. It is the only disease in the top 10 causes of death that cannot be prevented, cured or slowed.

## DEMENTIA RESOURCES NEAR YOU?

The La Crosse 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 tailor resources to your specific needs. They can also connect you with others who are going through similar experiences with support groups! These are amazing places to find resources and help you feel like your not alone. To find out more about what is near you contact Kelsey Flock the Dementia Care Specialist at the La Crosse Aging & Disability Resource Center in La Crosse 608-386-0767 [kflock@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:kflock@lacrossecounty.org).



## WHAT IS A DEMENTIA CARE SPECIALIST?

The Dementia Care Specialist Program supports people with dementia and their caregivers in order to ensure the highest quality of life possible while living at home. In order to accomplish this, the dementia care specialists (DCS) provides free information, assistance, connections, and support in various ways. A majority of counties in the state have a DCS, including La Crosse, Monroe, Jackson and Trempealeau! Contact your local ADRC for more information or go to this website to see how the Dementia Care Specialist Program can benefit you today!

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/dementia-care-specialist-program.htm>



### Careblazers

Careblazers is meant to help the everyday hero caring for a loved one with dementia. If you feel alone, frustrated, and overwhelmed while caring for your loved one with dementia, then you've come to the right place. The website has caregiver videos posted weekly on topics like: dementia and denial, how to improve sleep and how to tell if your loved one isn't safe home alone. There is also an online support community to connect with and a survival guide to download.

[www.careblazers.com/](http://www.careblazers.com/)

## UPCOMING SUPPORT & EDUCATION

### January & February

#### **Virtual Book Club-Dementia Reimagined.**

**WEDNESDAYS 6-7pm (Jan 13-Feb 24)**

We will read & discuss past and present treatments and research of dementia. Using the book to navigate our current knowledge and where we can go with dementia. Open to all (professional, caregiver, community) TO REGISTER CALL 715-273-6780. Books available for caregivers, email [kflock@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:kflock@lacrossecounty.org) to inquire.

#### **Savvy Caregiver Virtual Training- TUESDAYS 9:30-11am (2/9-3/16)**

This program focuses on helping family caregivers acquire and strengthen knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate for the role they've undertaken. 6 wk class that will build information, knowledge, skills, outlook, attitude and support daily life. Register by Feb 4th- Call 608-785-5700 or [adrc@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:adrc@lacrossecounty.org)

**Virtual Book Club WEDNESDAYS 10am-11am (2/3-3/10) Loving Someone Who Has Dementia".** Discover new ways to find hope while coping with stress and grief. Book club is open for anyone providing care and support to someone with dementia. Register call 920-675-4035. Free books once registered, email [kflock@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:kflock@lacrossecounty.org)

#### **Become a Dementia Friend! Feb 24th 11:30am**

Change the way people think, act & talk about dementia. Join the movement of people learning little ways to support someone living with dementia in their community. One hour interactive session. Virtual. Register [adrc@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:adrc@lacrossecounty.org) or 785-5700

### March & April

#### **Health Literacy for Dementia Workshop**

This will help improve communication and interaction with those who have dementia, help people better understand health information, improving care. Offered by Health Literacy WI & Inclusive

**March 3rd 2-3pm:**

[www.eventbrite.com/e/131396068177](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/131396068177)

**March 16th 10-11am:**

[www.eventbrite.com/e/131396792343](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/131396792343)

#### **Dementia Overview: March 10th, 10am**

Dementia is not normal aging. Learn of it's prevalence in our community, the risks and prevention and current resources. via zoom. Register [adrc@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:adrc@lacrossecounty.org) or 785-5700

#### **Brain Health Presentation: March 30th 10am**

Are you curious about ways to take care of your brain? Did you know science is able to provide insights into how to make lifestyle choices that may help you keep your brain and body healthy as you age? Join us to learn via Zoom. Register [adrc@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:adrc@lacrossecounty.org) or 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](http://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 Webinars: [www.caregiver.org/let%E2%80%99s-get-away-together-winter-series](http://www.caregiver.org/let%E2%80%99s-get-away-together-winter-series)