

# Priest Wellness Webinar Series

Dementia / Alzheimer's

July 21, 2021



**Ascension**

*Listening to you, caring for you.®*

# Welcome and Opening Prayer

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Tim Waldoch  
Chief Mission Integration Officer, Ascension Wisconsin

*“Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.”*

*-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*

## **Tim Waldoch**

Chief Mission Integration Officer, Ascension Wisconsin

# Dementia/Alzheimer's

CC Sharma ,MD

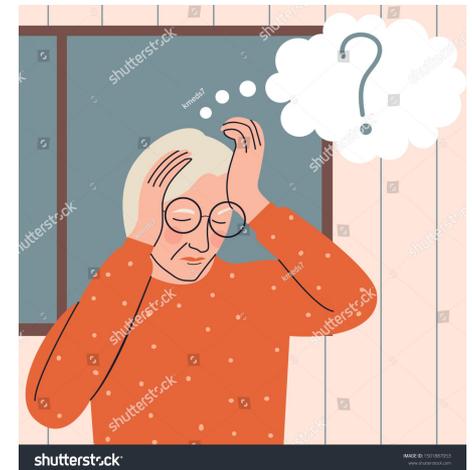
2021 – Priest Wellness Webinar Series

# Disclosures

Neither I, nor any immediate family member has any financial relationship with, or interest in, any commercial product or medication mentioned in this presentation.

# Alzheimer's Dementia

C.C. Sharma, MD



# What is dementia

**Constellation of changes in: memory, thinking, mood, behavior, movement.**

severe enough to affect daily living.

Caused by damage/destruction of nerve cells: trauma, stroke, disease.



# What causes dementia

Alzheimer's - abnormal protein plaques(beta-amyloid)/tangles(tau)

-->direct nerve death and disruption of communication links.

Vascular- series of strokes

Mixture

Lewy Body - type of abnormal protein collections; closely related to Parkinson's Dz.

Fronto-temporal (Pick's)- disinhibition, apathy, compulsive behaviors, personality change, speech abnormalities.

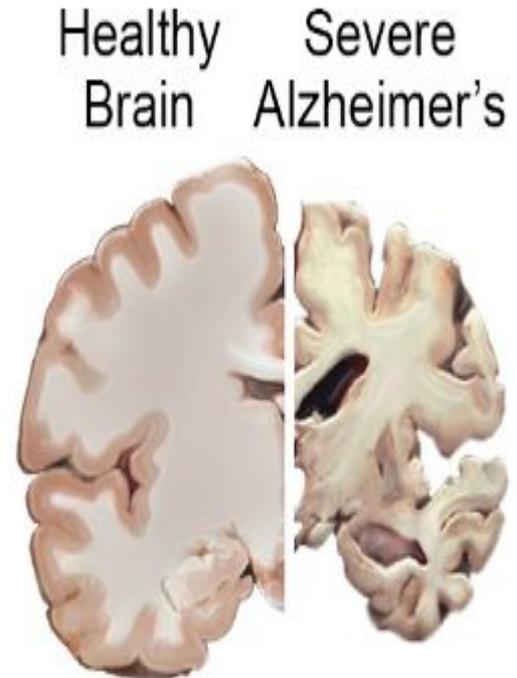
Often misdiagnosed as psychiatric condition

Phineas Gage- american railroad foreman with TBI in 1800s "decision making"

Frontal lobe= alcohol, drugs

# Understanding Alzheimer's Dementia

- ❖ Most common type of dementia >60% cases.
- ❖ After age 65, the risk of Alzheimer's doubles every five years.
- ❖ Affects Memory, Thinking, Behavior that can grow to be severe enough to interfere with daily functions.
- ❖ It is NOT a natural part of aging
- ❖ PROGRESSIVE= worsens
- ❖ In 2020, as many as 5.8 million Americans were living with Alzheimer's disease.
- ❖ The number of people living with the disease doubles every 5 years beyond age 65.



# New Estimates of Americans with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Show Racial and Ethnic Disparities

*Number of Americans with Alzheimer's Disease Expected to Increase*

Percentage of Adults Aged 65 and Older with Alzheimer's Disease by Race and Ethnicity



296249A



[www.cdc.gov/aging](http://www.cdc.gov/aging)

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2014

Alzheimer's Disease Projected to Nearly Triple by 2060



Census Population Projections Program, 2014 to 2060

## NORMAL Aging

Sometimes forgetting people's names or appointments, but remembering them later

- Depression, b12 deficiency, poor sleep “**mild cognitive impairment**”

## DEMENTIA

Forgetting the names of close friends or family, or recent events - Eg forgetting visitors you had that day

Occasionally forgetting something you were told

Asking for the same information, repeatedly.

Misplacing items but able to remember if re-trace your steps

Misplacing items in unusual ways Eg. tv remote in the fridge.

slowed thinking/reaction (driving reaction).

Easily confused when planning or thinking things through ; easily disoriented

# Evaluation

## **Mini-Mental State Exam (MMSE)**

<http://www.fammed.usouthal.edu/Guides&JobAids/Geriatric/MMSE.pdf>

## **Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MOCA)**

<https://www.parkinsons.va.gov/resources/MOCA-Test-English.pdf>

**Structural evaluation- MRI/CT**

# Gene Testing= likelihood not direct determinant

## 3 forms of **APOE Gene**

- APOE- e2, e3, -e4 gene
- E2 and E3 =neutral/protect
- **e4= strongest impact on risk** and may develop sx(s) earlier (mid 40s-50s)
  
- Defective gene can be inherited from either parent.
- 1 copy of gene= high risk
- 2 copies= even higher risk

Does not mean that a person will develop the disease; may have APOE-e4 gene and NOT develop symptoms->**complex role with other variant genes.**

**“Early onset” Familial Alzheimer’s Dz = RARE**  
hereditary gene mutations that are found in less than 1% global population (few hundred families).

Autosomal Dominant pattern (75%)

**APP**= amyloid precursor protein (discovered 1987)

**PS-1**= presenilin 1 (1992); variations in this gene are most commonly found in inherited Alzheimer’s.

**PS-2**= presenelin 2 (1993)

# Commercial/Home Gene Testing

**23andME= saliva---> screens for APOE-e4 gene**



# Treatment - Does not stop disease but may stabilize; “buying more time”

The cholinesterase inhibitors most commonly prescribed. a chemical messenger important for memory and learning.

- **Donepezil (Aricept®): approved to treat all stages of Alzheimer’s disease.**
- Rivastigmine (Exelon®): approved for mild-to-moderate Alzheimer’s as well as mild-to-moderate dementia associated with Parkinson’s disease.
- Galantamine (Razadyne®): approved for mild-to-moderate stages of Alzheimer’s disease.

Glutamate regulators -chemical messenger that helps the brain process information.

- **Memantine (Namenda®): approved for moderate-to-severe Alzheimer’s disease.**

COMBO

# Family typically wants behavior focused treatments

- ❖ **Low mood and Irritability= Antidepressants**
- ❖ **Restlessness, Verbally disruptive, Resistant/recalcitrant behavior= Anxiolytics**
- ❖ **Agitation/Aggression/hostile/hallucinations-delusions= Antipsychotics/Antiepileptics**  
(Research has shown that these drugs are associated with an increased risk of stroke and death in older adults with dementia. The FDA has ordered manufacturers to label such drugs with a “black box” warning)
- ❖ **Sleep disturbances= Suvorexant (Belsomra®) is the first medication specifically to treat insomnia in people living with Alzheimer’s disease (mild to moderate)**

# Treatment - close to cure?

aducanumab— is the first therapy to demonstrate **REMOVAL** of amyloid protein plaques  
can **SLOW/REDUCE** decline.

There is **no evidence** that aducanumab can **restore lost memories** or cognitive function.

(IV) infusion every month in hospital setting; SE=  
temporary swelling/small spots of bleeding on  
surface of brain



# References

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/alzheimers-disease-fact-sheet>

<https://www.cdc.gov/aging/aginginfo/alzheimers.htm#Who>

<https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/what-is-alzheimers>

<https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/what-is-alzheimers/causes-and-risk-factors/genetics>

<https://www.23andme.com/topics/health-predispositions/late-onset-alzheimers/>

Thanks for watching!

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**QUESTIONS?**

May the God of *health* be with you, bringing you to wholeness and holiness; healing you and hollowing you, filling you with the fullness of love, gentleness, and care. May this God be near you all your days and bring you to embrace the broken places of the world that are in need of healing. May the blessing of *health* be on you. Amen.

--Maxine Shonk, OP

## Closing Blessing and Announcements

### Next Webinar:

September 14th at 1:30 pm. Dr. Adam Romeiser will be speaking on Nutrition and Alcohol; Tips for Fostering Healthy Habits