

# Dementia

## Facts about Cognitive Disorders



*Don't Feel Guilty ∞  
You Can't Do It All!*



*Supervised activities, such as games and puzzles can stimulate cognitive functions in patients with mild to moderate dementia.*

### What is Dementia?

Dementia is a general term that describes a host of symptoms that include impaired memory, judgment, language, and motor skills. There are many disorders that can cause dementia. Some, such as Alzheimer's disease or Huntington's disease, lead to a progressive loss of mental functions, but other types of dementia can be halted or reversed with appropriate treatment.

### Symptoms of Dementia

- Language problems, such as trouble finding the name of familiar objects
- Misplacing items
- Getting lost on familiar routes
- Personality changes and loss of social skills
- Losing interest in things you previously enjoyed, flat mood
- Difficulty performing tasks that take some thought, but that used to come easily, such as balancing a checkbook, playing games, and learning new information or routines

### Complications

Complications depend on the cause of the dementia, but may include the following:

- Abuse by an overstressed caregiver
- Increased infections anywhere in the body
- Loss of ability to function or care for self
- Loss of ability to interact
- Reduced lifespan
- Side effects of medications used to treat the disorder

### Caring For Dementia Patients

People with moderate or advanced dementia typically need round-the-clock care and supervision to prevent them from harming themselves or others. They also may need assistance with daily activities such as eating, bathing, and dressing. Dementia sufferers tend to do better in their own home, where familiar surroundings reduce their anxiety.

Professionally administered therapy programs can help enhance quality of life for dementia patients. These include "Activities with a Purpose" and the "Memory Lane Program."

### Need more information?

Association for Frontotemporal  
Dementias (AFTD)  
866-507-7222  
<http://www.FTD-Picks.org>

CJD Aware!  
Tel: 504-861-4627  
<http://www.cjdaware.com>

National Institute of Mental Health  
(NIMH)  
866-415-8051  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

Alzheimer's Disease Education  
and Referral Center (ADEAR)  
National Institute on Aging  
800-438-4380  
<http://www.alzheimers.nia.nih.gov>