



MedStar Good Samaritan
Hospital

Knowledge and Compassion
Focused on You

Brain Fitness: Use It or Lose It

Karen Kansler, RN, MA, BSN
Community Outreach Nurse
MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital

Presenter: Karen Kansler

Let's start with a story

Mary is a successful stockbroker from Baltimore. She made a lot of money on the stock market. She then met Jack, a handsome young man. She married him and had 3 children. They lived in Chicago. She then stopped working and stayed home to bring up her children. When they were teenagers she went back to work. She and Jack lived happily ever after.

Questions

- What was her name ?
- What did she do for work?
- When did she go back to work?
- What state did she live in after marriage?

Answers

- Mary
- Stockbroker
- When her kids were teenagers
- Illinois

Today's Memory Talk

- Memory problems, what's normal vs. what's not, and when to seek help
- Alzheimer's disease and dementia, symptoms, stages, diagnosis, and resources.
- Keeping the brain healthy



Normal Age-related Forgetfulness



- Occasionally forgetting where you left things you use regularly, such as glasses or keys.
- Forgetting names of acquaintances or blocking one memory with a similar one, such as calling a grandson by your son's name.
- Occasionally forgetting an appointment.

Normal Age-Related Forgetfulness

- Having trouble remembering what you've just read, or the details of a conversation.
- Walking into a room and forgetting why you entered. Becoming easily distracted.
- Not quite being able to retrieve information you have “on the tip of your tongue.”

Not So Normal Age-related Forgetfulness

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- Challenges in planning or solving problems
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusion with time or place
- Trouble with visual images & spatial relations
- New problems with words in speaking/writing
- Misplacing things & can't retrace steps
- Decreased or poor judgment
- Withdraw from work or social activities
- Changes in mood/personality

Possible Risks or Threats to Brain Health

- Some medicines, or improper use of them
- Smoking
- Excessive use of alcohol
- Heart disease, diabetes, and other health problems
- Poor diet
- Insufficient sleep
- Lack of physical activity
- Little social activity and being alone most of the time

Brain Injury

- Older adults are at higher risk of falling and other accidents that can cause brain injury.

How to reduce risk:



- Exercise to improve balance and coordination
- Take a fall prevention class
- Make your home safer
- Review medicines and vision with your health care provider
- Wear safety belts and helmets
- Get enough sleep

Dementia

- Dementia is a disease marked by a gradual loss of cognitive functioning which can also incorporate losses of muscular, emotional, and social functioning as well.
- It is a permanent and progressive disease that eventually renders people unable to care for themselves.

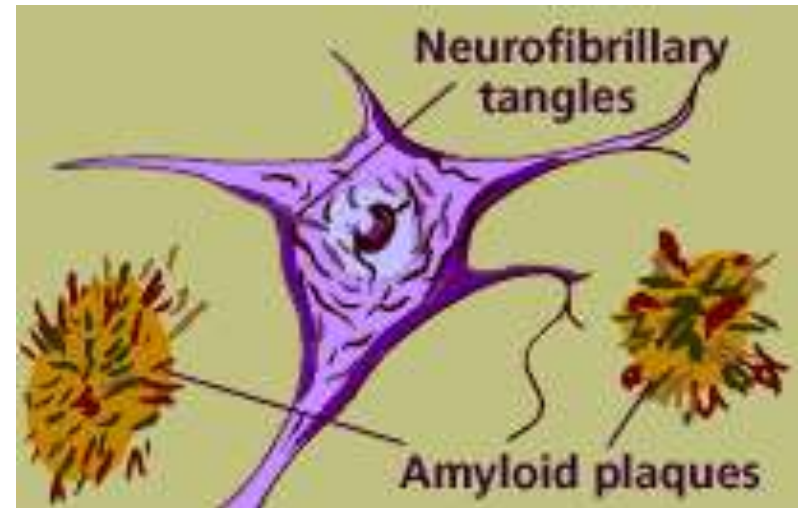
Dementia - Causes

- 50+ different causes
- Neurological disorders such as **Alzheimer's** (approx. 50-70% of people with dementia have Alzheimer's)
- Vascular disorders such as multi-infarct disease (multiple strokes)
- Inherited disorders such as Huntington's
- Infections such as HIV

Alzheimer's/Dementia - Incidence

- About 5 million people in the U.S. suffer from Alzheimer's disease.
 - Approx. 5%-8% of people over 65.
 - As many as 50% over the age of 80

Plaques and Tangles



Scientists suspect that **plaques** (clusters of proteins that accumulate between nerve cells) and **tangles** (protein fibers that develop in dying cells) are main causes for loss of brain tissue and cell deterioration, which leads to Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's/Dementia Early Stage

- Begins with forgetfulness
- Progresses to disorientation and confusion
- Personality changes
- Symptoms of depression/manic behaviors

Alzheimer's/Dementia - Middle Stage

- Need assistance with ADLs (activities of daily living, such as bathing, eating and dressing)
- Unable to remember names
- Loss of short-term recall
- May display anxious, agitated, delusional, or obsessive behavior
- May be physically or verbally aggressive
- Poor personal hygiene
- Disturbed sleep
- Inability to carry on a conversation
- May use “word salad” (sentence fragments)
- Posture may be altered
- Disoriented to time and place
- May ask questions repeatedly

Alzheimer's/Dementia - Late Stage

Characteristics

- Loss of verbal articulation
- Loss of ambulation
- Bowel and bladder incontinence
- Extended sleep patterns
- Unresponsive to most stimuli

Interventions

- Caring for physical needs
- Maintain integrity of the skin
- Medical interventions
- Most activities are inaccessible

Clock Drawing Test

- Draw a clock face, put all the numbers in, and put the time at 2:45



Clock Drawing Test



Normal
Score 10



Mild
Cognitive
Impairment
(Numbers error
and
placement
of hands)
Score 8



Moderate
Cognitive
Impairment
Score 4



Severe
Cognitive
Impairment
Score 2

Sunderland, 1989

UB

74

Brain Health

The six pillars of a brain-healthy lifestyle are:

- 1- Regular exercise
- 2- Healthy diet
- 3- Mental stimulation
- 4- Quality sleep
- 5- Stress management
- 6- An active social life

Brain fitness - A Daily Plan



- Scan a newspaper
- Watch/listen to the morning news
- Do weekly crossword/Sudoku puzzle — **try something new often**
- Play a video/card/board game
- Communicate with another person
- **LAUGH every day! :)**
- **EXERCISE every day!** (aerobics, dance, yoga, tai chi, etc.)
- Listen to music

Take a FREE Memory Assessment

- Test your brain health and take our free online memory assessment to find out if you need to see a geriatric specialist for your memory. Visit [MedStarHealth.org/Memory](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Memory) to learn more.



More Information

Center for Successful Aging at MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital: Learn about [dementia symptoms and memory loss](#).

Community Programs:

- Contact a local Area Agency on Aging (AAA)
- Contact a local Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
- Or, go to <http://eldercare.gov/>

Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org

Alzheimer Foundation of American: www.alzfdn.org

National Institutes of Health: <http://nih.gov>

National Institute on Aging at NIH: <http://nia.nih.gov>

ClinicalTrials.gov, a service of NIH: <http://clinicaltrials.gov>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/aging>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity>

