



Alzheimer's Disease
International

Know the faces of dementia

What you need to know about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias



True or false?

Tick the boxes then check the answers on the following pages

True False

		True	False
1	People under the age of 65 do not get dementia		
2	Memory loss is the only symptom of dementia		
3	Dementia is a part of normal ageing		
4	There is no cure for dementia		
5	There are many types of dementia		
6	Dementia is most common in richer countries		
7	Once a person is diagnosed with dementia, there is nothing that can be done		
8	One important reason why people do not go to the doctor with memory problems is that they are ashamed		
9	There is nowhere to go for advice and help		
10	If one of my parents has dementia I will get it too		
11	Alzheimer's Disease is different from dementia		
12	There is a test to diagnose dementia		

Here are the answers to the questions on the previous page with some more facts about dementia

1 People under the age of 65 do not get dementia

False Dementia can develop in younger people but is rare. Over the age of 65, dementia affects 1 in 20 people. For people over the age of 80 the number rises to 1 in 6.

2 Memory loss is the only symptom of dementia

False Memory loss is a common early symptom of dementia. However it only becomes an important symptom of dementia when other symptoms also occur such as changes in personality and behaviour, loss of sense of time and space, loss of ability to perform the everyday tasks of daily living and problems with language.

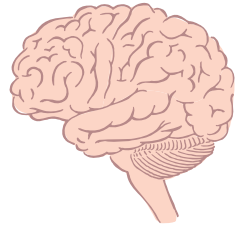
Every person is unique and dementia affects people differently – no two people will have symptoms that develop in exactly the same way.

Dementia is not a part of normal ageing and can occur in people aged under 65



3 Dementia is a part of normal ageing

False Dementia is not part of normal ageing. Everyone gets a bit more forgetful as they get older; that does not mean they have dementia.



Dementia is a disease of the brain, not part of normal ageing

4 There is no cure for dementia

True There is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease or for most other causes of dementia. Nor can a cure be expected in the foreseeable future.

Researchers are still at the stage of developing more drugs that will slow down the progression of the disease, at least in some cases. They still do not know how to prevent the disease from occurring, how to stop its progression, or how to reverse its effects. It is hoped that more research into the causes of dementia will eventually make a cure possible.

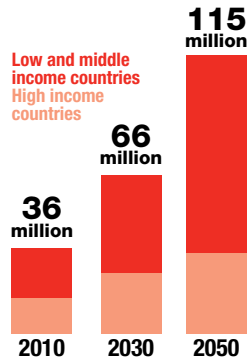
5 There are many types of dementia

True Dementia is a term used to describe any condition where a variety of different brain functions such as memory, thinking, language, planning and personality deteriorate over time.

There are a large number of different types but the majority of people have Alzheimer's disease and/or vascular dementia.

6 Dementia is most common in richer countries

False Dementia is a global problem. 58% of all people with dementia worldwide live in low and middle-income countries. This is expected to rise to 71% by 2050. These high numbers are due to the rapid ageing of populations in these countries.



The growing number of people with dementia in the world

7 Once a person is diagnosed with dementia, there is nothing that can be done

False Although dementia cannot be cured there is a great deal that can be done to help.

The symptoms of memory loss can sometimes be helped by treatment with anti-dementia drugs called cholinesterase inhibitors. Better understanding and management can help associated symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and agitation.



Local and national Alzheimer associations provide advice and support to people with dementia and their carers after a diagnosis

8

One important reason why people do not go to the doctor with memory problems is that they are ashamed

True The stigma that surrounds dementia is a result of a lack of understanding and knowledge. It is important that people understand that a person with dementia continues to be a person of worth and dignity, and deserving the same respect as any other human being. Alzheimer associations around the world are working hard to fight the stigma associated with dementia by raising awareness.



Peter has dementia, has been a Trustee of Alzheimer's Society (UK) and is an ambassador for 'living with' dementia

9

There is nowhere to go for advice and help

False You are not alone. Many people and organisations, both professional and voluntary, can help. Do not be afraid to ask.

Alzheimer associations offer help and support to people with dementia and their carers. Contact the Alzheimer association in your country. Many associations have telephone helplines, as well as branches or chapters throughout the country. Local groups will know about services in your area. Alzheimer associations will also be able to put you in touch with other caregivers who will understand your worries and problems and will be able to help you.



A list of Alzheimer associations around the world can be found at www.alz.co.uk/associations

10 If one of my parents has dementia I will get it too

False If your parent developed dementia in old age then your chance of developing dementia in old age is slightly greater than a person with no dementia in the family.

There are a few very rare cases where Alzheimer's disease does run in families. In these cases there is a direct link between an inherited mutation in one gene and the onset of the disease. These tend to be cases of 'early onset' Alzheimer's disease, which affects those under the age of 60. In these cases, the probability that close family members (brothers, sisters and children) will develop Alzheimer's disease is one in two.

11 Alzheimer's Disease is different from dementia

False It is not different. Alzheimer's Disease *is* a dementia. It is the most common type of dementia.

12 There is a test to diagnose dementia

False There is no specific test. The diagnosis is made by the GP or specialist taking a history both from the person with the symptoms and from a close member of the family or a close friend. The history – together with a physical and mental state examination, memory tests, some blood tests, and possibly a brain scan – will normally make it possible to arrive at a diagnosis.



Know the faces of dementia

Is it only old people who get dementia?
Do people with Alzheimer's disease just
lose their memory?

Find out how much you really know
about Alzheimer's disease and related
dementias with this booklet, which aims
to challenge some of the myths and
uncover the truth.

Containing the answers to the most
frequently asked questions, this booklet
will provide you with information that
every individual needs to know about
this often misunderstood disease.

With thanks to Dr Nori Graham and
Dr James Warner for their assistance in
the development of this booklet.



For more information about dementia go to
www.alz.co.uk

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