

Dr. Don Colbert: The Caution Signs of Alzheimer's and Dementia You Need to Know

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Knowing what's going on is vitally important for your brain and overall health. And when you know the facts, then and only then can you take the necessary steps to achieve the health you want.

Taking action is the whole reason for knowing what's going on. Whether it's a national health trend, a symptom you've noticed in your body or a detail that makes everything run smoother, it's all important. Please don't ignore it.

As you formulate your plan to improve your brain health, there are many details to consider.

What is Alzheimer's and dementia? With all forms of Alzheimer's and dementia, brain cells and synapses (brain cell connections) degenerate and eventually die as amyloid plaques and tangles accumulate and destroy brain cells and synapses. It is a downsizing of the brain due to multiple factors, including chronic inflammation; a deficiency of key hormones, nutrients and brain nutrients; progressive insulin resistance of brain cells; and glycation of the brain from a diet high in sugar, carbs and starches. When the brain shuts down those areas of the brain that are clogged with amyloid plaques and tangles, the brain is trying to protect itself. It's the body's downsizing program for the brain. Obviously, you don't want those plaques and tangles in your brain because you don't want those areas to shut down!

Here are the typical signs of Alzheimer's disease at each stage, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

Stages of Alzheimer's and Dementia

Mild

- Having difficulty performing tasks in a social or work setting
- Forgetting material that you just read
- Experiencing increased trouble with planning or organizing
- Losing or misplacing objects or documents
- Having trouble remembering names of new people
- Struggling to find the right word

Moderate

- Experiencing changes in sleep patterns
- Being confused about where you are or what day it is
- Feeling moody or withdrawn, especially in socially or mentally challenging situations
- Forgetting events or part of personal history
- Getting lost
- Needing help choosing appropriate clothes for day or event
- Having personality or behavior changes
- Experiencing suspiciousness, delusions or compulsive behaviors
- Having trouble controlling bladder or bowels
- Being unable to remember own address or phone number, high school or college
- Wandering

Severe

- Forgetting surroundings
- Having increased difficulty communicating
- Losing basic physical abilities: walking, sitting or swallowing
- Having low awareness of recent happenings
- Needing 24-7 care

- Having vulnerability to infections, especially pneumonia

First phase of Alzheimer's and dementia is when communication between brain cells is jammed, connections are lost and cells die. The best time to take action is now.

Let The Results Speak for Themselves

You can't form an effective plan if you don't know where you're starting. To know where you're starting in the fight against Alzheimer's and dementia, you have to know your numbers. That's why I usually recommend patients begin with a full panel blood test to figure out where they are currently.

Then when you get the results back, you will know more clearly which areas need to be worked on. Never forget that Alzheimer's and dementia are not hopeless or inevitable.

For more information on "Dr. Colbert's Healthy Brain Zone," which released on Jan. 3, visit . {eo}

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Don Colbert, MD, has been a board-certified family practice doctor for over twenty-five years in Orlando, Florida, and most recently in Dallas, Texas. He is also board-certified in antiaging medicine through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine. He is the author of three New York Times best-selling books: "Dr. Colbert's Keto Zone Diet," "The Seven Pillars of Health" and "Dr. Colbert's 'I Can Do This' Diet," along with best sellers "Toxic Relief," the Bible Cure series, "Living in Divine Health" and "Stress Less." He has sold more than 10 million books and treated more than 50,000 patients in his years of practicing medicine.