

New Alzheimer's Drug 'Isn't a Cure' But Provides Patients With Hope

Read Time: 3 Minutes 18 Seconds

Alzheimer's Association reports that more than 6 million Americans of all ages have Alzheimer's—and that number is growing fast. It is projected that, barring the development of medical breakthroughs to prevent, slow or cure the brain disease, 12.7 million people age 65 and older will have it by 2050.

Researchers frantically and diligently seeking ways to obliterate the progressive disease have developed an experimental drug they hope will modestly slow it down from inevitably worsening, and it could be approved by as soon as January, the Associated Press has reported.

The Japanese drug maker Eisai, partnered with the U.S. company Biogen, will soon release the drug Lecanemab, a bright spot in what has followed repeated disappointments in a quest of better Alzheimer's treatments. NBC News reported Eisai's announcement earlier this fall that cognitive decline slowed over 18 months in patients who received Lecanemab, although it remains unclear as to how much of a difference it might make in people's lives.

The statistics are overwhelming and can be frightening. One in three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. It kills more than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined.

Deaths from Alzheimer's have more than doubled between 2000 and 2019, while those from heart disease—the leading cause of death in America—have decreased. At age 70, seniors are twice

as likely to die before age 80 than those who do not have the disease.

Those numbers are only part of the reason for the optimism of the developers of Lecanemab. The AP reported that the companies have provided full results of the study of nearly 1,800 people in the earliest stages of dementia and Alzheimer's. The results of the study were recently published in the New England Journal of Medicine and were conducted by a research team led by Dr. Christopher van Dyck at Yale University.

Every two weeks for 18 months, half of the study participants received intravenous Lecanemab and the other half a placebo. Those given Lecanemab declined more slowly, it was discovered. Lecanemab delayed patients' worsening by about five months over the course of the study. The AP reported that Lecanemab recipients were 31% less likely to advance to the next stage of the disease during the study.

"That translates to more time in the earlier stages," when people function better, Eisai's Dr. Michael Irizarry told the AP.

Some experts in the medical field are skeptical of the tangible impact of the study's results.

"It is unlikely that the small difference reported in this trial will be noticeable by individual patients, Dr. Madhav Thambisetty of the National Institute on Aging, told the AP.

revealed earlier this week that, "one day ahead of a data presentation at the Clinical Trials on Alzheimer's Disease (CTAD) Conference, *Science* reported a second patient death has been linked to Eisai and Biogen's lecanemab."

But others, like Dr. Ron Petersen, an Alzheimer's expert at the Mayo Clinic, seemed a bit more optimistic. Petersen said the drug's effect was "a modest one, but I think it's

clinically meaningful.” Petersen said even a few months’ delay in progression could give someone a little more time when they’re functioning independently.

Maria Carrillo, chief science officer for the Alzheimer’s Association, said the study results show that Lecanemab attacks a sticky protein called amyloid—considered one of several culprits behind Alzheimer’s—and can delay the disease’s progression.

“We’re all trying to really grasp what it means to slow Alzheimer’s, but this is a first,” Carrillo told the AP.

While Eisai, Biogen and Alzheimer’s researchers are hopeful that Lecanemab will provide insight into further destruction of the degenerative disease, some are promoting more natural solutions to preventing and treating it.

 New York Times bestselling author Dr. Con Colbert has written a book titled “Dr. Colbert’s Healthy Brain Zone,” a book that will help show readers how to reverse memory loss and reduce your risk of dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Colbert says the key ingredient to fighting memory loss, dementia and Alzheimer’s isn’t in prescriptions or unnatural treatments, but in “a healthy, gut-friendly diet.” The book will give readers insight about the science behind the brain-gut connection so that they can make wise and healthy diet choices that will protect their brain from cognitive diseases and disorders.

More and more, science is proving that a healthy digestive system is the key to a healthy brain and body, Colbert writes.

The book provides:

A weekly plan that incorporates supplements and healthy heating for optimum results.

It includes 30 easy-to-make recipes for restoring balance and

maximizing brain function.

It provides instructions for other simple protocols that help you maintain a healthy brain. {eo}

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