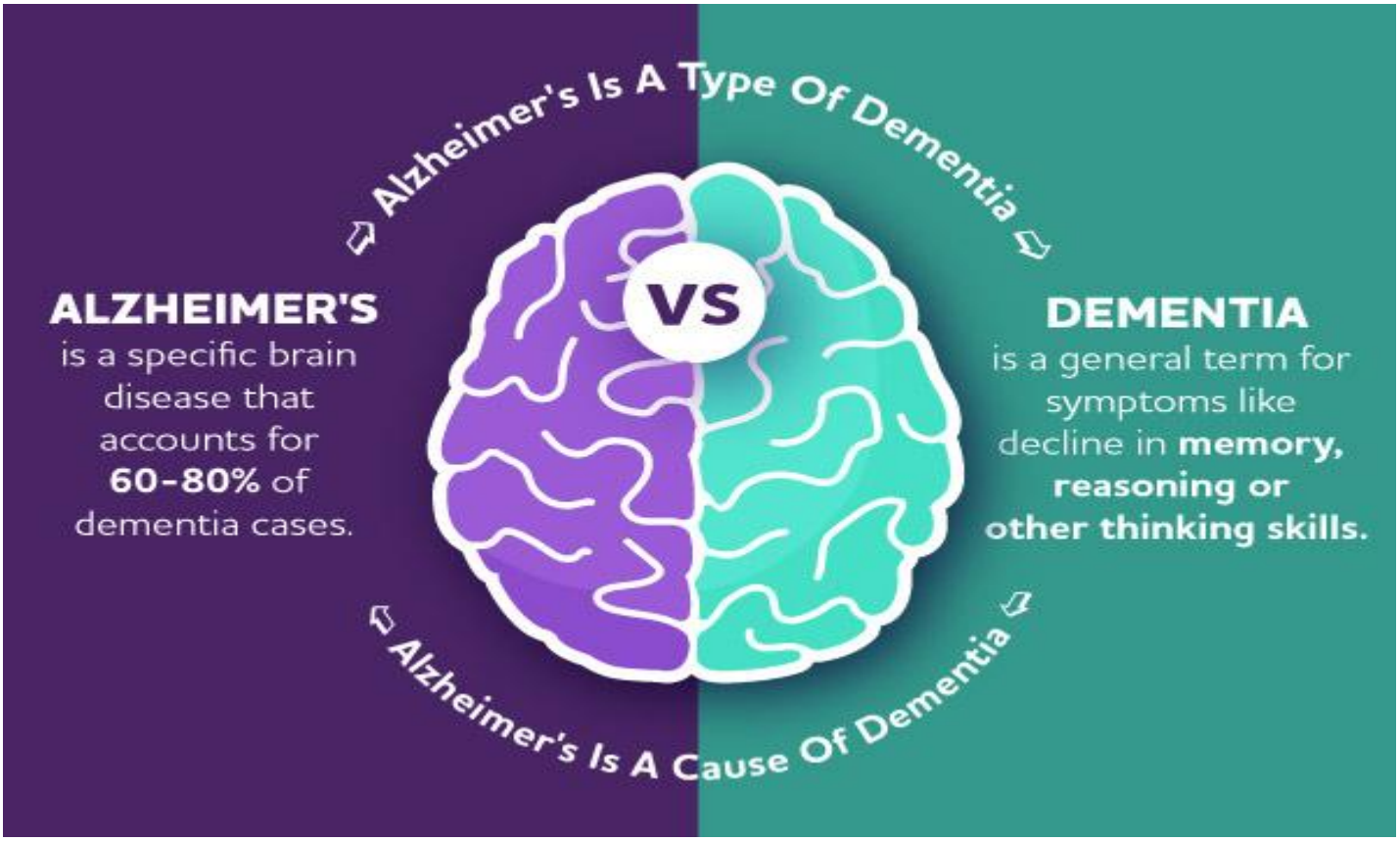
Dementia vs. Alzheimer's Disease: What Is the Difference?



In summary, dementia is an umbrella term that describes a collection of symptoms (cognitive, functional and behavioral) that are caused by specific diseases. Alzheimer's disease is the most common disease that causes dementia, but Frontotemporal degeneration, Lewy Body disease, Vascular disease can all cause symptoms of dementia. Not all cognitive decline is considered dementia, dementia must be driven by an underlying progressive neurodegenerative disease.

Learning about the two terms and the difference between them is important and can empower individuals living with Alzheimer’s or another dementia, their families and their caregivers with necessary knowledge.

Dementia overview

Dementia describes a group of symptoms associated with a decline in memory, reasoning or other thinking skills. Many different types of dementia exist, and many conditions cause it. Mixed dementia is a condition in which brain changes of more than one type of dementia occur simultaneously. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for 60-80% of dementia cases.

Dementia is not a normal part of aging. It is caused by damage to brain cells that affects their ability to communicate, which can affect thinking, behavior and feelings.

Learn more: Risk Factors for Dementia, Symptoms of Dementia, Causes of Dementia, Diagnosis of Dementia and Treatment of Dementia.

Alzheimer’s overview

Alzheimer’s is a degenerative brain disease that is caused by complex brain changes following cell damage. It leads to dementia symptoms that gradually worsen over time. The most common early symptom of Alzheimer’s is trouble remembering new information because the disease typically impacts the part of the brain associated with learning first.

As Alzheimer’s advances, symptoms get more severe and include disorientation, confusion and behavior changes. Eventually, speaking, swallowing and walking become difficult.

Though the greatest known risk factor for Alzheimer’s is increasing age, the disease is not a normal part of aging. And though most people with Alzheimer’s are 65 and older, approximately 200,000 Americans under 65 are living with younger-onset Alzheimer’s disease.

Learn more: 10 Early Signs and Symptoms of Alzheimer’s, Alzheimer’s and the Brain, Risk Factors for Alzheimer’s, Diagnosis of Alzheimer’s, 3 Stages of Alzheimer's, Treatment of Alzheimer’s and Alzheimer’s Research and Progress.

Help and support are available

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another dementia, you are not alone. The Alzheimer's Association is the trusted resource for reliable information, education, referral and support to millions of people affected by the disease.

- Call our 24/7 Helpline: 800.272.3900
- Locate your local Alzheimer's Association
- Explore our Virtual Library
- Create an action plan using our ALZNavigator™ tool

Take our free e-learning course

Our course, Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia, outlines the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia, symptoms, stages, risk factors and more.

Take the Course

https://training.alz.org/products/4053/understanding-alzheimers-and-dementia?_ga=2.247390596.1264930661.1567518213-2020266794.1559748290&_gl=1*1pase8i*_ga*MTU4OTEwNDY3NS4xNzkzNTY1NzUy*_ga_9JTEWVX24V*czE3OTM1NjU3NTIkbzEkZzEkdDE3OTM1NjU4MTUkajYwJGwwJGgw

https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/difference-between-dementia-and-alzheimer-s

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