

HEALTHY LIVING REPORT

Focus on: Alzheimer's disease (AD): Is it inevitable?

Repository of memory, creator of civilization, crafter of culture, keeper of the flame that makes us unique: our mind. It is our ultimate possession. Strip us naked and take all our possessions—our mind remains.

To lose one's mind is the tragedy of Alzheimer's disease (AD). As the brain deteriorates there is a lobotomy-like effect. There appears to be no sign of struggle, just a silent and painless fading of talent, memory, speech, thought and voice, as the victim disappears into a blur. There is no "rage, rage against the dying of the light," rather a slow, inexorable dimming.

Caregivers helplessly watch as their loved ones wither into a shell of the person they once were. Death must surely be a welcome liberation.

MYTH: Alzheimer's has always been around.

FACT: AD is a new disease. In fact it was not until 1976 that its prevalence and severity was recognized. [Katzman R. The prevalence and malignancy of Alzheimer disease: a major killer. *Arch Neurol.* 1976;33(4):217-218.]

A leading Alzheimer researcher searched for papers on AD:

I looked everywhere. I looked on three continents ... no matter where I looked, I couldn't find anything that indicated there was very much AD prior to the 1960s.... I don't believe for a second [that AD was not noticed] because of all diseases, Alzheimer's is one of the most difficult to miss.... The only other plausible explanation is that it was less frequent then than it is now. [Murray Waldman, MD, presenter at the 9th International Conference on Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease in a *Medscape Psychiatry* interview. <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/590106>]

Although AD used to be a rare disease, in less than a generation it has gone from an obscure neurologic diagnosis to a leading cause of debility and death. Currently nearly 5½ million Americans have AD; it is the 6th leading cause

of death in the US and the 5th leading cause of death for those over 65 in the US. [Thies W, Bleiler L. 2012 Alzheimer's disease facts and figures. *Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association.* 2012;8(2):131-168.]

MYTH: Old age means senility.

FACT: Old age has not been traditionally equated with senility. People previously have lived long lives without losing their mental faculties.



I am old enough to remember when most elderly died without becoming demented. In fact, most neurodegenerative diseases have increased dramatically over the past 30 years. [Russell Blaylock, MD. Personal communication. July 3, 2012.]

In no literature, lay, medical, or religious is the idea of old age and senility linked. The concept of widespread senility among the elderly only appears in any literature in the late 70s and early 80s. In fact according to the OED senility only meant old until the 1960s when it acquired the additional meaning of demented. [Murray Waldman, MD. Personal communication. July 5, 2010.]

MYTH: Alzheimer's disease is a psychological disorder.

FACT: Although AD manifests with psychological or emotional

symptoms, Alzheimer's disease is a brain disorder. It was named for German physician Alois Alzheimer who first described it in medical literature in 1906. He discussed a patient with an unusual personality disorder whose brain, on autopsy, was found to have shrunk.

Autopsies reveal that in AD there is brain cell (neuron) death, there are widespread fatty deposits in small blood vessels in the brain and there is an accumulation of tangles and clumps of protein in and around brain cells. [Thies W, Bleiler L. 2012 Alzheimer's disease facts and figures. *Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association.* 2012;8(2):131-168.]

MYTH: AD is increasing because the elderly population is increasing.

FACT: AD is growing faster than the elderly population is increasing. When Dr. Waldman (cited above) investigated the number of femur fractures since 1960 he found that they increased in a linear fashion as would be expected in an aging population. However, when he looked at AD incidence, he found the increase was not linear but exponential!

MYTH: AD is only a disease of the elderly.

FACT: AD is now affecting younger and younger people. For example, the story of a man with “early-onset” AD, living in a nursing home, unable to speak or feed himself was headlined on AOL *HealthNews*, July 7, 2009: Doctors said my husband was just depressed—in fact he had Alzheimer’s at 36.

Early-onset Alzheimer’s—pre-senile dementia—is thought to affect 15,000 people under 65 in the UK. ‘However, the true figure is probably three times higher,’ according to the Alzheimer’s Society. [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1197927/Doctors-said-husband-just-depressed—fact-Alzheimers-36.html]

According to the Alzheimer’s Association, AD is occurring in the 5th, 4th and even 3rd decade of life. [Thies W, Bleiler L. 2012 Alzheimer’s disease facts and figures. *Alzheimer’s & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer’s Association*. 2012;8(2):131-168.]

MYTH: AD is different from dementia.

FACT: Alzheimer’s disease (AD) is the most common form of dementia. The word “dementia” means “deprived of mind.” Millions of older people are placed into this category when they exhibit memory loss, confusion, changes in personality and dwindling ability to perform everyday activities.

The second most common type of dementia, called vascular or multi-infarct dementia, is caused by blockages in small blood vessels in the brain (mini-strokes).

The symptoms of most dementias include confusion, slurred speech and/or impaired thinking. However memory loss is often not present and that’s the distinguishing feature of Alzheimer’s disease.

In most dementias the person’s “whole mind” is not lost—some talents and abilities are not affected. AD robs the person of their whole mind.

MYTH: AD is decreasing.

FACT: AD is increasing. Epidemiological data collected over a 25-year period shows the incidence of AD in the 1960s was 2% in people over the age of 85 years, whereas today, most experts accept that the incidence of AD in this population is 50%. It is 20% over the age of 75 and 10% in individuals over the age of 65 years. From 2000 to 2006 Alzheimer’s deaths increased 46.1%! [Murray Waldman, MD, presenter at the 9th International Conference on Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease in a *Medscape Psychiatry* interview. <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/590106>]

To go from barely noticed to one out of six deaths is a catastrophe. AD now joins the list of other major killers and debilitating disorders of civilized nations—cancer, heart disease, diabetes and autism.

MYTH: Memory lapses are a sign of oncoming Alzheimer’s.

FACT: AD is not mere forgetfulness. For example, forgetting where you put your car keys may be a sign of aging but forgetting what to do with those keys could be AD. Other symptoms of AD include agitation, suspiciousness, combativeness, repetition and wandering.

MYTH: Genes will unlock the secrets of Alzheimer’s.

FACT: Although researchers are exploring genetic causes, AD can’t be a genetic disease because genetic diseases don’t suddenly surface in a population;

something else must be happening.

Since AD is a new disorder we must ask, “What are we doing or being exposed to now that we weren’t doing or being exposed to just a few decades ago?”

MYTH: No one knows the cause of AD.

FACT: AD appears to be due to brain toxicity. AD victims have elevated mercury levels in their brains. [Ehmann WD et al. Brain trace elements in Alzheimer’s disease. *NeuroToxicology*. 1986;7:197-206.] [Thompson CM et al. Regional brain trace-element studies in Alzheimer’s disease. *NeuroToxicology*. 1988;9:1-8.]

Research reveals that mercury poisoning causes symptoms similar to those suffered by AD victims.

Dr. Boyd Haley, Professor and Chair of the Department of Chemistry at the University of Kentucky, Lexington has established a likely connection between mercury toxicity and AD. [Haley BE. The relationship of toxic effects of mercury to exacerbation of the medical condition classified as Alzheimer’s disease. *Medical Veritas*. 2007;4:1510-1524.]



Working with researchers at the University of Calgary, Dr. Haley reports: "Seven of the characteristic markers that we look for to distinguish Alzheimer's disease can be produced in normal brain tissues, or cultures of neurons, by the addition of extremely low levels of mercury ... Alzheimer's diseased patients have at least 3 times higher blood levels of mercury than controls." [Leong CCW et al. Retrograde degeneration of neurite membrane structural integrity of nerve growth cones following in vitro exposure to mercury. *NeuroReport*. 2001;12(4):733-737.]

MYTH: Mercury toxicity and Alzheimer's are different.

Fact: Mercury toxicity and AD have identical symptoms [Neal PA, Jones RR. Chronic mercurialism in the hatters' fur-cutting industry. *JAMA*. 1938;110:337-343.] [Maghazahi HI. Psychiatric aspects of methylmercury poisoning. *J Neurology, Neurosurgery, and Psychiatry*. 1974;37:954-958.] [Siblerud RL et al. Psychometric evidence that mercury from silver dental fillings may be an etiological factor in depression, excessive anger, and anxiety. *Psychological Reports*. 1994;74:67-80.] [Fagala GE, Wigg CL. Psychiatric manifestations of mercury poisoning. *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 1992;31:306-311.] AD victims become:

Socially uninhibited or lose all initiative and interest in activities ... delusions, hallucinations, and sleep disorders ... grossly inappropriate judgment and sometimes are misdiagnosed as being depressed or psychotic. [Golden R. Dementia and Alzheimer's disease. *Minnesota Medicine*. 1995;78:25-30.]

MYTH: Mercury from vaccines does not cause AD.

FACT: Hugh Fudenberg, MD, one of the world's leading immunogeneticists (over 850 papers published in biomedical journals) reports that if an individual had five consecutive flu shots his/her chances of getting Alzheimer's disease is ten times higher than if they had zero, one or two shots. [Hugh Fudenberg, MD, presentation, National Vaccine Information Center conference. Arlington, VA, September 1997.]

Dr. Fudenberg claims the mercury found in most flu vaccines builds up in the brain. Note: Mercury, even in trace amounts (which are toxic), is still found in many child and adult vaccines.

MYTH: Dental fillings don't put mercury in the brain.

FACT: "Silver" fillings (amalgams) are 50% mercury and can outgas for decades, all the while the mercury is absorbed into the brain in toxic amounts. In the book *Alzheimer's Disease* (described as "the best single book on the topic" by the *New England Journal of Medicine* [Beal MF. Alzheimer Disease, review of *Alzheimer Disease*, by RD Terry et al, eds. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 1994;331:620.]) the authors state: "Chronic low level Hg [mercury] toxicity in AD should be considered as a potential pathogenetic factor." [Terry RD

et al. Brain trace elements in Alzheimer disease. In Terry et al., eds., *Alzheimer Disease*. NY: Raven Press, 1994;363.]

Other sources of mercury are (especially large) fish, cosmetics, soil, pesticides, film, paint and plastics.

MYTH: Aluminum is not linked to AD.

FACT: Aluminum is a neurotoxin and is linked to AD. Aluminum is also used in many vaccines and is a brain toxin linked to AD. Neuroscientist Chris Shaw, PhD links the aluminum hydroxide used in vaccines to Parkinson's, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease), autism and Alzheimer's. [Tomljenovic L, Shaw CA. Do aluminum vaccine adjuvants contribute to the rising prevalence of autism? *J. Inorg. Biochem*. 2011;105(11):1489-1499.] After mice in Shaw's laboratory were injected with aluminum they exhibited symptoms of Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and Lou Gehrig's disease. In an interview Dr. Shaw stated,

No one in my lab wants to get vaccinated.... We weren't out there to poke holes in vaccines. But all of a sudden, oh my God—we've got neuron death! [<http://www.ageofautism.com/2012/03/the-aluminum-threat-a-interview-with-chris-shaw.html>]

Other sources of aluminum include: processed cheeses, white flour and baking powder. Fluoridated water increases aluminum absorption in the brain. Fluoride is also toxic to the brain, and is linked to the formation of beta-amyloid plaques (seen in AD) and damage to various brain structures. [Varner JA et al. Chronic administration of aluminum-fluoride or sodium-fluoride to rats in drinking water: alterations in neuronal and cerebrovascular integrity. *Brain Research*. 1998;784(1-2):284-298.]

MYTH: There is no way to prevent, halt or reverse Alzheimer's disease.

FACT: It may be possible to prevent, halt or reverse AD. Reversal or halting the progression of AD has been reported after removal of mercury amalgams. Tom Warren reversed his AD by removing mercury dental fillings and dental infections and avoiding food allergens. In *Beating Alzheimer's, A Step Towards Unlocking the Mysteries of Brain Diseases* he comments on the response to his discovery:

By the time I finished writing Beating Alzheimer's three other persons in our hometown regained their short-term memory following the identical program that reversed my AD. A daughter of a 93-year-old woman wrote that her mother recovered from AD.... I am aware of physicians who use my book to help patients regain their short-term memory. Several years ago, a physician reversed his own AD and has returned to full time practice. Two nurses reversed schizophrenia.... Occasionally someone tells me I saved his or her life. [Warren T. *Beating Alzheimer's, A Step Towards Unlocking the Mysteries of Brain Diseases*. Garden City Park, NY: Avery Publishing, 1991.]

Mary T. Newport, MD reversed her husband's AD by adding coconut oil to his diet. Her work went viral on YouTube and is discussed in her book *Alzheimer's Disease, What if there was a cure?* [Newport M. *Alzheimer's Disease, What if there was a cure?* Laguna Beach, CA: Newport MT Basic Health Publications, 2011.]

Russell Blaylock, MD, a neurosurgeon, comments on coconut oil:

Ketones are the only other fuel that brain cells can use other than glucose but unlike glucose they do not produce free radicals or lipid peroxidation when they are

metabolized and can suppress excitotoxicity and inhibit microglial activation, all important processes in Alzheimer's disease prevention and treatment. Extra virgin coconut oil is high in medium chain fatty acids, that also suppresses AD destruction. Both short chain and medium chain fatty acids reduce brain pathology. [Personal communication. July 3, 2012.]

Stop Alzheimer's Now! by Bruce Fife, ND, puts the latest information all together to protect your brain from degeneration and to prevent and reverse AD, Parkinson's, ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) and macular degeneration. [Fife B. *Stop Alzheimer's Now.* Colorado Springs, CO: Piccadilly Books, Ltd., 2011.]

Recommendations for anyone with or without AD or neurological disorders:

1. Get checked for heavy metal toxicity (urine challenge test and other tests) to discover your heavy metal "load." You may need to see a healthcare practitioner to have this test prescribed for you.
2. Begin a detoxification program. Have mercury fillings removed by a dentist who specializes in their safe removal. To find a holistic dentist go to www.holisticdental.org. Popular detoxification of heavy metals includes EDTA chelation and oral chelation therapy. Additional detox therapies include: organic cilantro; baths with hydrated bentonite clay.
3. Avoid allergens. Because of malfunction or weakness of your immune system due to toxicity, certain foods may cause toxic brain reactions, especially aspartame and other artificial sweeteners, monosodium glutamate (MSG) and refined, processed foods.
4. Avoid all vaccines; even those labeled as "mercury or thimerosal free" may contain "trace" amounts that are dangerous.
5. Eliminate all aluminum: cookware, utensils, foil, underarm deodorants, any drinks in aluminum cans.
6. Work with a trained homeopathic practitioner to remove aluminum and mercury from the body and the brain.
7. Root canal teeth can cause the brain damage (tubulin reduction) seen in AD. Hal Huggins, DDS states: "It might be worthwhile to consider the presence of root canals in people with Alzheimer's." [<http://www.hugginsappliedhealing.com/alzheimers.php>]
8. Use nutritional therapy. In addition to coconut oil, many foods and supplements may improve brain function. *Stop Alzheimer's Now!* (mentioned above) is an excellent source of nutritional and other approaches.
9. Subluxations cause pressure on the brain and spinal cord that affect brain and body function. Doctors of Chiropractic specialize in locating and correcting subluxations. This should be a part of everyone's healthcare especially anyone suffering from AD or any neurological disorder.

Changes in the brain have been detected up to 25 years before the signs of Alzheimer's are noticed. It therefore would be prudent for everyone to get checked for toxicity and subluxations while they are still young and have the will and energy to make changes in their lives and promote healing. [www.cosmosmagazine.com/news/5815/signs-alzheimer-s-may-show-25-years-earlier]

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