

Alzheimer's Disease / Dementia Flowchart

Pre-Diagnosis / Signs of Dementia

- Discuss changes in memory and cognition with a healthcare provider – this can aid in ruling out other conditions and/or begin the diagnostic process. Don't assume it's Alzheimer's disease, it may be something else.
- Make an appointment specific to your memory concerns with your healthcare provider
- Take notes on what you are seeing and bring to your appointment.
- Contact Alzheimer's Association for support, guidance, educational opportunities and learn about advocacy efforts



Mild Cognitive Impairment

Mild cognitive impairment (MCI) causes a slight but noticeable and measurable decline in cognitive abilities, including memory and thinking skills. A person with MCI is at an increased risk of developing Alzheimer's or another dementia.

- Contact Alzheimer's Association www.alz.org/dsw and/or Pima Council on Aging www.pcoa.org for support and education resources
- Accept changes and consider lifestyle changes and healthy habits to reduce the risk of developing dementia
- Ensure legal affairs are in order (Power of Attorney and Advance Directives)
- Develop coping strategies for day-to-day living. For example put together a three-person team who can understand and support you throughout the journey
- Reach out for and accept help



Early Stage

"Early stage" refers to people, irrespective of age, who are diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or related disorder, and are in the beginning stage of the disease. The early stage of Alzheimer's can last for years.

- Contact Alzheimer's Association and/or Pima Council on Aging for support and education resources
- Attend education sessions and support groups provided in the community
- Talk with care partner(s) regarding future care plans and options (legal, financial and long-term care)
- Develop support circles including healthcare community, family & friends, and community resources
- Ensure legal affairs are in order (Power of Attorney, Healthcare Proxy, and Advance Directive). Resources include theconversationproject.org, pimaendoflifecare.org, AZ Attorney General's Office and Five Wishes.
- Talk with others and share diagnosis as appropriate
- Accept changes and live life to the fullest
- Consider lifestyle changes and healthy habits
- Develop a safety plan that includes issues related to driving and firearms. Enroll in Medic Alert+Safe Return program and other GPS enabled locating devices
- Maximize independence by making considerations for safety, reducing stress, coping with diagnosis and managing daily living activities
- Consider treatment options and involvement with clinical trials



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Middle Stage

The middle stages of Alzheimer's are typically the longest and can last for many years. As dementia progresses, the person with Alzheimer's will require a greater level of care.

Steps for Caregivers

- Contact Alzheimer's Association and/or Pima Council on Aging for support and education resources
- Attend education sessions and support groups provided in the community
- Continue to develop and work with support circles including healthcare community, family & friends, and community resources
- Develop a plan for daily care activities that includes personal care, activities and medication management
- Develop and carry out safety plan that includes issues related to driving and firearms. Enroll in Medic Alert+Safe Return program and other GPS enabled locating devices
- Learn ways to enhance communication and manage behaviors
- Explore appropriate living situation for person with dementia, including financial considerations and possible coverage. In the middle stages, people should typically not be living alone
- Plan ahead for care options (see Continuum of Care chart) and learn about paying for future care
- Ensure legal affairs are in order (Power of Attorney and Advance Directives)
- Develop coping strategies for day-to-day living and ensure self-care for the caregiver. Learn stress reduction skills.



Late Stage

The late stage of Alzheimer's disease may last from several weeks to several years. As the disease advances, intensive, around-the-clock care is usually required.

Steps for Caregivers

- Contact Alzheimer's Association and/or Pima Council on Aging for support and education resources
- Attend education sessions and support groups provided in the community
- Continue to develop and work with support circles including healthcare community, family & friends, and community resources
- Develop a plan for daily care activities as the need for care increases that includes food monitoring, incontinence management, skin health and infection prevention
- Talk with family members and loved ones about end-of-life care options including withholding life-sustaining treatment
- Review legal documentation including Advance Directives / Living Wills to ensure the person's wishes are carried out.
- Consider appropriate living situation for person with dementia. In the late stages, people will require 24-hour care and should not be left alone
- Consider late-stage care options including palliative and hospice care
- Plan ahead for care options (see Continuum of Care chart) and learn about paying for future care
- Develop coping strategies for day-to-day living and ensure self-care for the caregiver. Learn stress reduction skills.