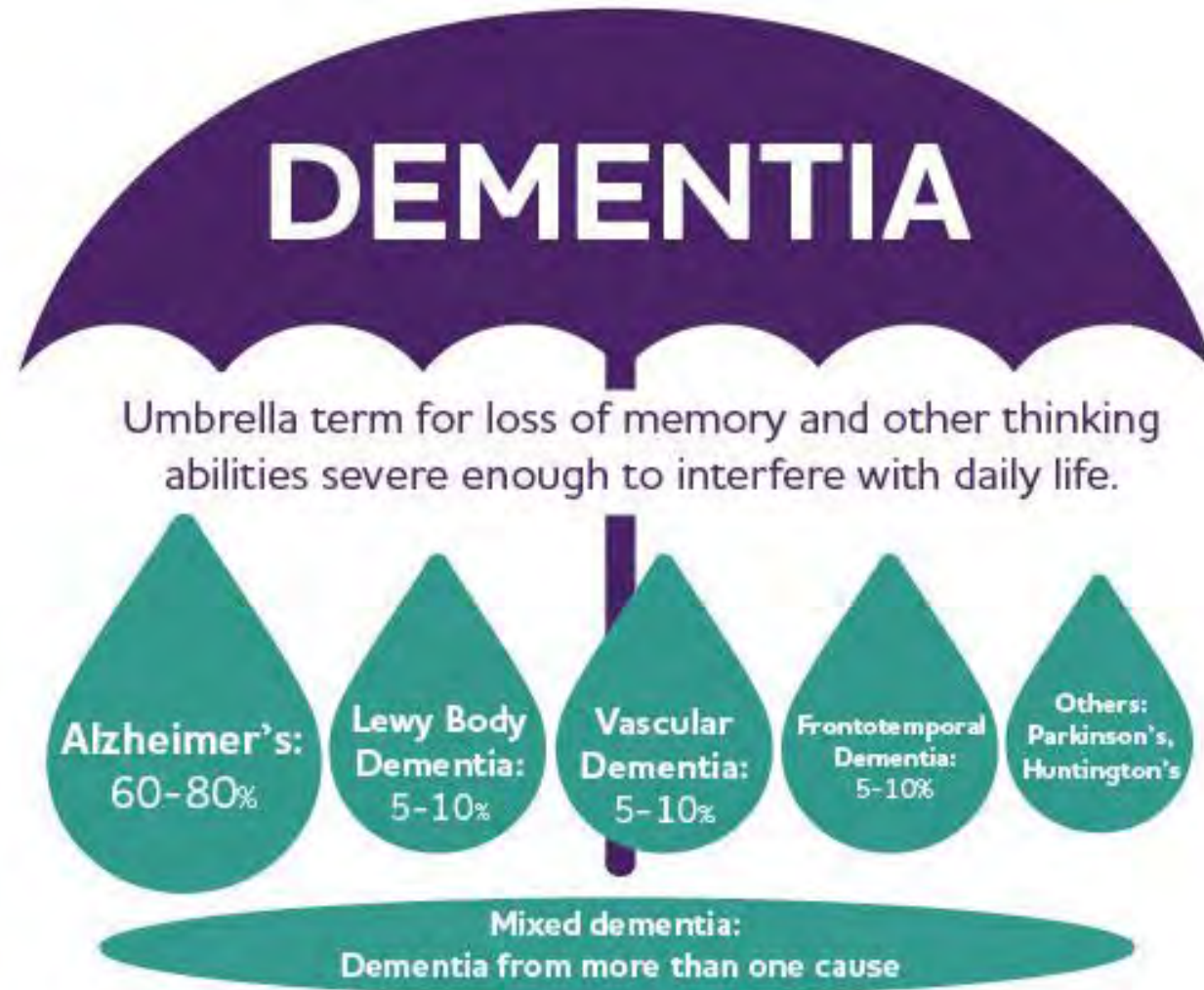




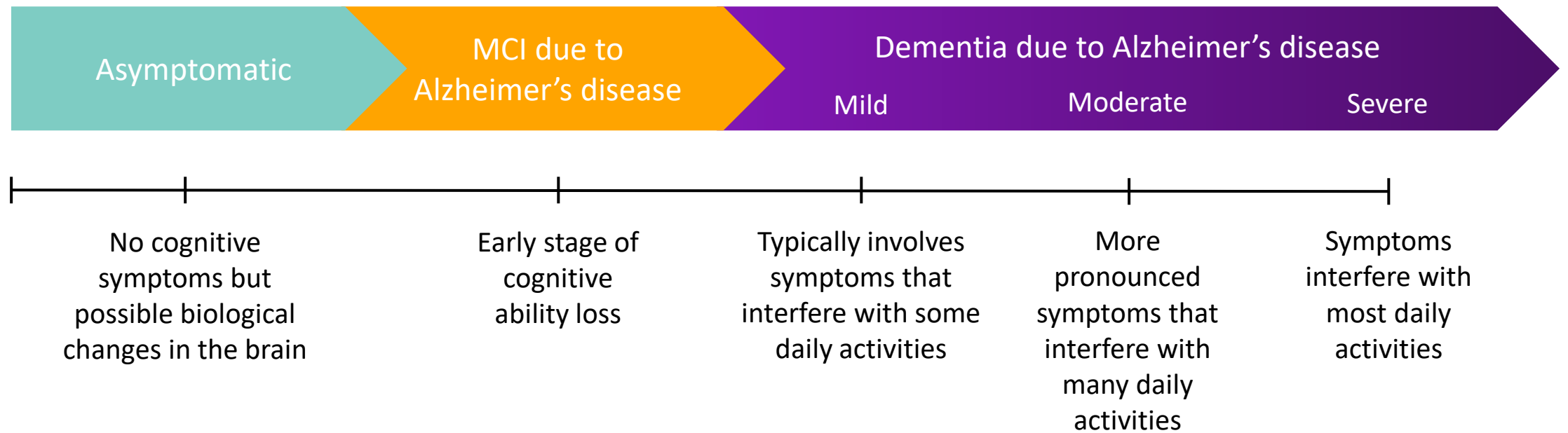
Managing Dementia Through Effective Caregiving

ALZHEIMER'S  ASSOCIATION®

What is Dementia?



Alzheimer's disease is a continuum





Approximately how many Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's?

Over 3 million

More than 6 million

About 8 million

About 11 million



**MORE THAN 6 MILLION
AMERICANS ARE LIVING WITH
ALZHEIMER'S**

Approximately how many Americans
are currently living with Alzheimer's?

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About how many Americans provide unpaid care for people living with Alzheimer's or other dementias?

About 8 million

Over 11 million

Over 14 million

More than 18 million



**OVER 11 MILLION AMERICANS
PROVIDE UNPAID CARE FOR PEOPLE
WITH ALZHEIMER'S OR OTHER DEMENTIAS**

**About how many Americans provide
unpaid care for people living with
Alzheimer's or other dementias?**

About 8 million

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What is Communication?

Connecting with others
Conversation
Self-expression
Talking
Sense of Self
BODY LANGUAGE
Attitude
Tone of voice
Sending messages
Receiving messages
Communication
Body language
Listening
Interaction
Relationships
Making Decisions
WORDS
FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

Communication Changes Throughout the Disease

Early stage (Mild)

- Convey thoughts and feelings through language.
- Able to make decisions about future care.
- May misinterpret what others say.

Middle stage (Moderate)

- Use basic words and sentences.
- Rely more on tone of voice, facial expression & body language.
- Continue to need emotional connection & meaningful activity.

Late stage (Severe)

- May still respond to familiar words, phrases or songs.
- Use body language and the five senses to connect.





Communication in the Early Stage

Changes you may notice:

- Difficulty finding the right words.
- Taking longer to speak or respond.
- Withdrawing from conversations.
- Struggling with decision-making or problem-solving.



Communication in the Early Stage

To connect:

- Ask directly how to help with communication.
- Keep sentences clear and straightforward.
- Leave plenty of time for conversations.
- Include the person in conversations that affect him or her, including planning for the future.



Communication in the Early Stage

Keep in mind:

- Avoid making assumptions.
- Speak directly to the person.
- Communicate in the way that is most comfortable for the person. Options include phone, email, and in person.
- Laugh together.
- Be honest and stay connected with each other.

Communication in the Middle Stage

Changes you may notice:

- Increased difficulty finding the right words.
- Using familiar words repeatedly.
- Inventing new words to describe familiar things.
- Easily losing train of thought.
- Speaking less frequently.
- Communicating through behavior rather than words more often.

****Consult a doctor when you notice major or sudden changes****



Communication in the Middle Stage

To connect, approach the person gently

- Approach from the front, say who you are and call the person by name.
- Maintain eye contact and get at eye level if seated or reclining.
- Avoid criticizing, correcting and arguing.
- Pay attention to your tone.
- Take your time.



Communication in the Middle Stage

To connect, join the person's reality

Keep respect and empathy in your mind, then:

- Assess the person's needs.
- Let the person know you hear his or her concerns, whether they are expressed through words, behavior or both.
- Provide a brief answer.
- Respond to the emotions behind the statement.



Communication in the Middle Stage

To connect, keep it slow and basic

- Use short sentences and basic words.
- Speak slowly and clearly, one person and one question at a time.
- Limit distractions.
- Be patient.
- Offer a guess or fill in words if acceptable.



Communication in the Middle Stage

To connect, give multiple cues

- Provide visual cues and gestures.
- Avoid sudden movement.
- Write things down for the person.
- Put answers into your questions.
- Repeat as needed.
- Turn negatives into positives.
- Avoid quizzing.



Communication in the Middle Stage

To connect, respond empathically and reassure

- Join the person's reality.
- Provide reassurance that you hear and understand.
- Focus on the feelings, not the facts.
- Validate and redirect the person if necessary.





Communication in the Late Stage

Changes you may notice:

- Communication is reduced to a few words or sounds.
- Possible responses to familiar words or phrases.

To connect:

- Listen for expressions of pain and respond promptly.
- Help the person feel safe and happy.
- Continue to bring respect to each conversation.
- Keep talking.
- Use all five senses to communicate.



Communication in the Late Stage

Connect through touch:

- Feel different fabrics.
- Identify shapes by touch.
- Give lotion hand massages.
- Identify everyday items in a bag by touch.
- Visit with animals.
- Sculpt using non-toxic materials.
- Hold the person's hand or stroke his or her arm or back.



Communication in the Late Stage

Connect through sight

- Laminate brightly colored pictures to look at together.
- Watch videos of animals, nature or travel.
- Look at photo albums together.
- View photos of famous paintings, favorite settings or prominent people from the past.
- Go bird-watching or visit an aquarium.
- Paint with watercolors.
- Go outdoors or sit by an open window together.



Communication in the Late Stage

Connect through sound:

- Listen to familiar music.
- Listen to recordings of the sounds of nature, farms, cities or animals.
- Identify musical instruments by sound.
- Listen to songs or speech in the person's native language.
- Read books, poetry, scripture, or newspaper articles to the person.
- Let the person hear the gentle tone of your voice.



Communication in the Late Stage

Connect through smell:

- Make small plastic bags containing items for the person to smell, such as:
 - Herbs or spices.
 - Cotton balls dipped in essential oils.
 - Grass clippings or fragrant flowers.
 - Teas or coffee beans.
- Use fragrant lotions for hand massages
- Cook or feed the person foods that smell good, such as apple pie or chicken soup.



Communication in the Late Stage

Connect through taste:

- Favorite foods.
- Home-baked goodies.
- Popsicles.
- Flavored drinks.
- Ice creams and puddings.

Communication in All Stages of the Disease

- Join the person's reality to connect.
- Understand and accept what you can and cannot change.
- Remember that the person retains a sense of self despite the losses of the disease.
- Demonstrate respect and connect through feelings.
- Always treat the person as the adult he or she is.
- Try to decode the person's communications.
- Recognize the effects of your mood and actions.
- Try to understand the source of reactions.
- Help meet the needs while soothing and calming the person.



Some of the most difficult conversations are:



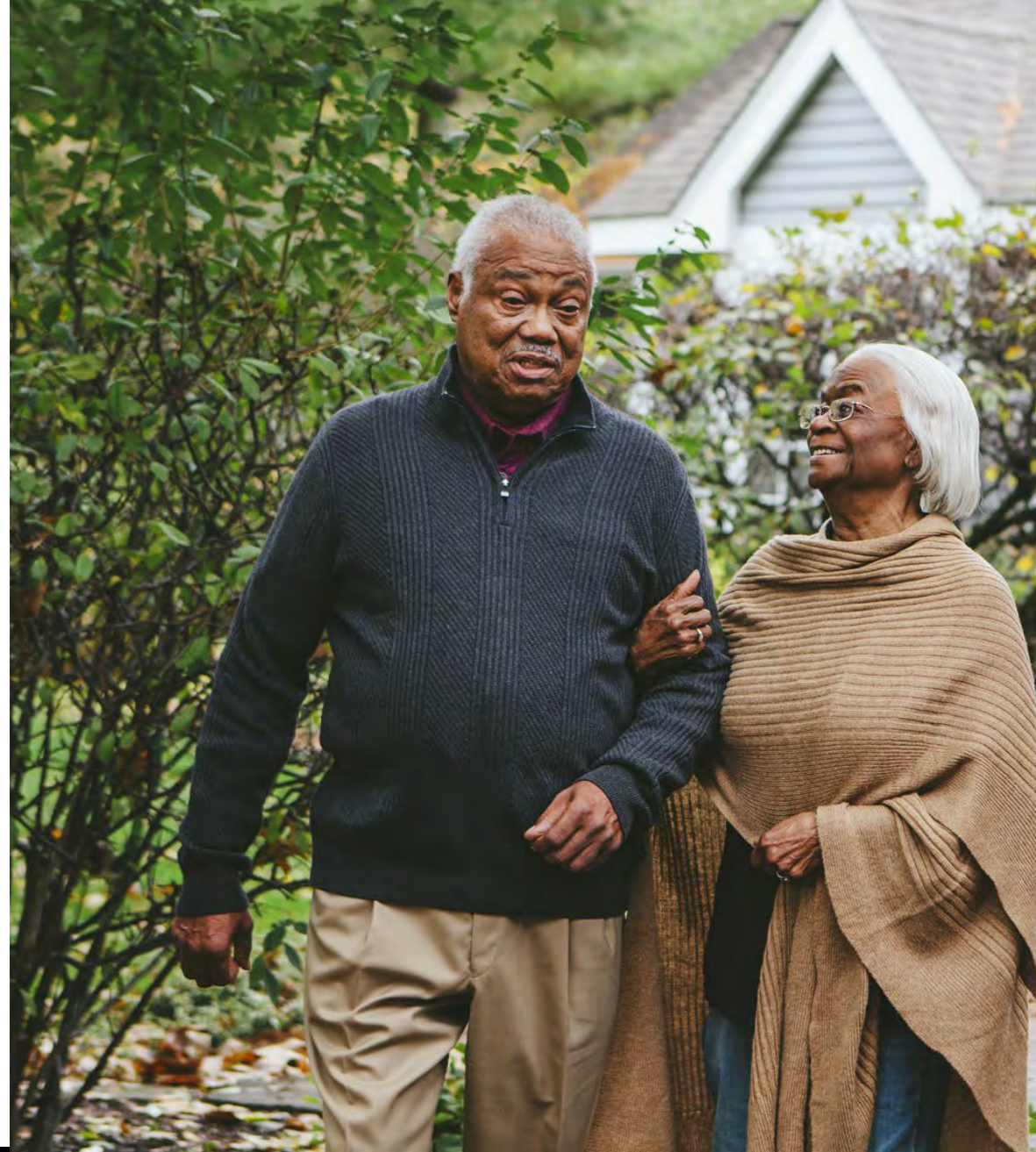
Going to the doctor



Deciding when it is necessary to stop driving



Making legal and financial plans to cover future care needs



**Remember, no one
can provide all of this
support alone.**

Form a care team and talk
with family about concerns as
they arise.

TALK ABOUT IT



Alzheimer's Association Key Resources

We're available wherever and whenever you need reliable information and support.



On the phone – 24/7 Helpline, 800.272.3900



Online – [alz.org](https://www.alz.org)



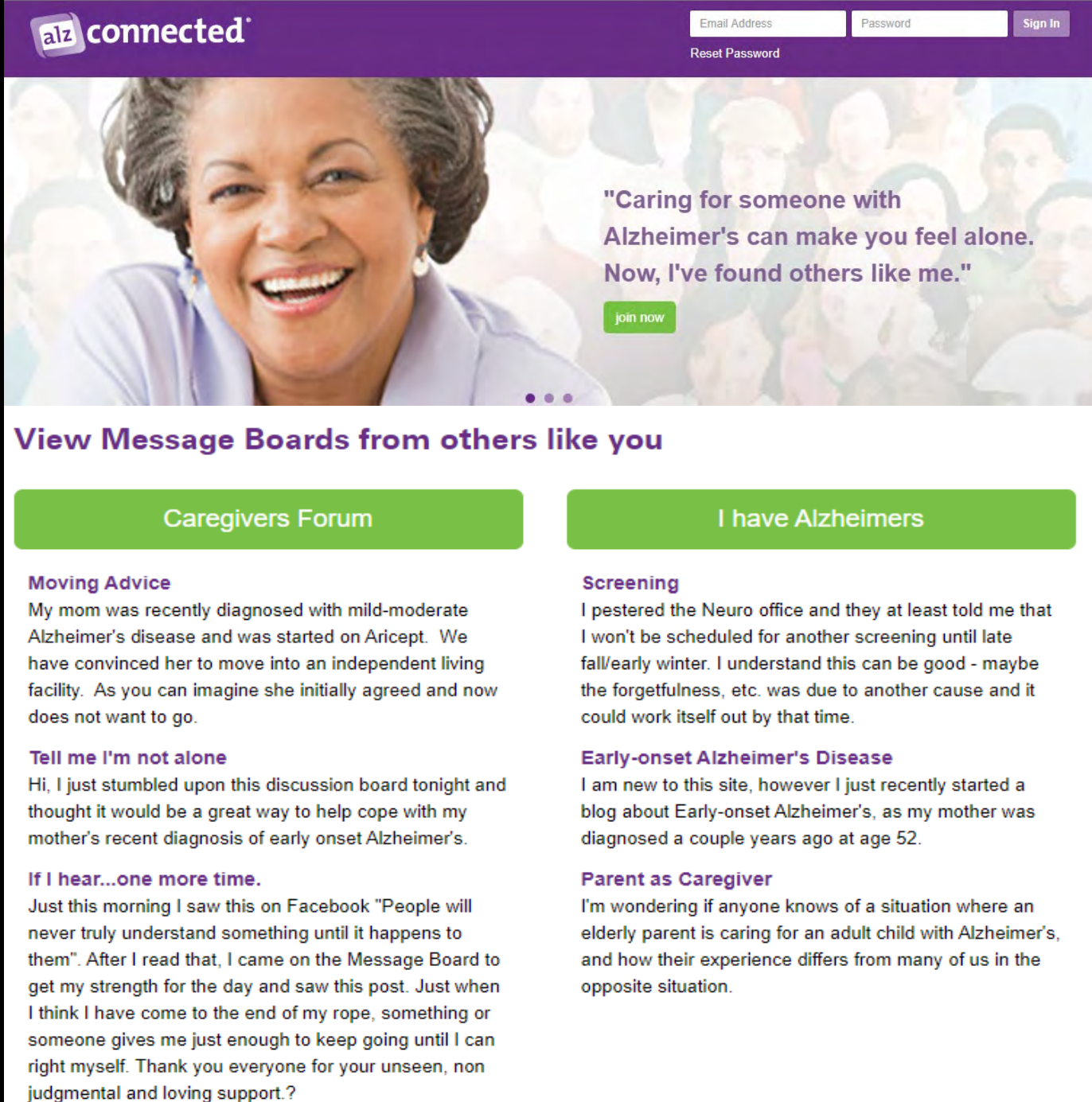
In communities nationwide – [alz.org/CRF](https://www.alz.org/CRF)

ALZConnected®

www.alzconnected.org

ALZConnected® is a free online community for everyone affected by Alzheimer's or another dementia, including:

- People living with the disease
- Caregivers
- Family members
- Friends
- Individuals who have lost someone to Alzheimer's or another dementia



The image shows a screenshot of the ALZConnected website. At the top, there is a purple header with the 'alz connected' logo on the left. On the right, there are input fields for 'Email Address' and 'Password', a 'Sign In' button, and a 'Reset Password' link. Below the header is a large banner featuring a smiling woman in a purple shirt. To her right, a quote reads: "Caring for someone with Alzheimer's can make you feel alone. Now, I've found others like me." Below the quote is a green 'join now' button. Underneath the banner, the text 'View Message Boards from others like you' is displayed. This is followed by two green buttons: 'Caregivers Forum' and 'I have Alzheimers'. Below these buttons are three columns of text representing forum posts. The first column is titled 'Moving Advice' and contains a post about a mother's diagnosis and move. The second column is titled 'Tell me I'm not alone' and contains a post about finding support on the message board. The third column is titled 'If I hear...one more time.' and contains a post about feeling understood. The fourth column is titled 'Screening' and contains a post about a screening appointment. The fifth column is titled 'Early-onset Alzheimer's Disease' and contains a post about a mother's early diagnosis. The sixth column is titled 'Parent as Caregiver' and contains a post about caring for an elderly parent.

alz connected

Email Address Password Sign In
Reset Password

"Caring for someone with Alzheimer's can make you feel alone. Now, I've found others like me."

join now

View Message Boards from others like you

Caregivers Forum I have Alzheimers

Moving Advice
My mom was recently diagnosed with mild-moderate Alzheimer's disease and was started on Aricept. We have convinced her to move into an independent living facility. As you can imagine she initially agreed and now does not want to go.

Tell me I'm not alone
Hi, I just stumbled upon this discussion board tonight and thought it would be a great way to help cope with my mother's recent diagnosis of early onset Alzheimer's.

If I hear...one more time.
Just this morning I saw this on Facebook "People will never truly understand something until it happens to them". After I read that, I came on the Message Board to get my strength for the day and saw this post. Just when I think I have come to the end of my rope, something or someone gives me just enough to keep going until I can right myself. Thank you everyone for your unseen, non judgmental and loving support.?

Screening
I pestered the Neuro office and they at least told me that I won't be scheduled for another screening until late fall/early winter. I understand this can be good - maybe the forgetfulness, etc. was due to another cause and it could work itself out by that time.

Early-onset Alzheimer's Disease
I am new to this site, however I just recently started a blog about Early-onset Alzheimer's, as my mother was diagnosed a couple years ago at age 52.

Parent as Caregiver
I'm wondering if anyone knows of a situation where an elderly parent is caring for an adult child with Alzheimer's, and how their experience differs from many of us in the opposite situation.

Alzheimer's Navigator®

www.alzheimersnavigator.org

Alzheimer's Navigator is a free online tool that helps guide caregivers to answers by creating a personalized action plan and linking you to information, support and local resources.

ALZHEIMER'S navigator®

alzheimer's  association®

What do you want to know?

Choose one of these topics to develop a personalized action plan.



Working with Your
Doctor



Symptoms



Safety



Legal Planning



Knowledge



Financial Planning



Driving



Caregiver Support



Care Options



Daily Living

A photograph of two women, one with dark hair and one with white hair, smiling and talking to each other. The woman with dark hair is wearing a plaid shirt and a light-colored cardigan. The woman with white hair is wearing a blue denim shirt over a white top. They are standing in front of a window with white frames.

ALZHEIMER'S  ASSOCIATION®

800.272.3900 | [alz.org](https://www.alz.org)®

Questions?