

## Is there anything I can do to prevent getting dementia ?

At the present time, there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease. However, there are a few things you can do to decrease your chance of developing dementia:

- Watch what you eat - eat fruits and vegetables; avoid fatty foods.
- Exercise regularly.
- Keep your cholesterol in normal range.
- Follow your doctor's orders if you have high blood pressure.

## What is the UAMS Memory Research Center?

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Memory Research Center is one of 29 programs funded by the National Institute on Aging. We are dedicated to unraveling the causes, treatment, and cure of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. We are devoted to 1) promoting interdisciplinary research into the causes, symptoms, treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of memory loss, and 2) strengthening the education of caregivers, patients, healthcare professionals and the community on Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.

## Additional Resources:

### Alzheimer's Arkansas Programs & Services

501-224-0021  
1-800-689-6090  
[www.alzark.org](http://www.alzark.org)

### Alzheimer's Association

Central Arkansas Regional Center  
(501)265-0027  
National Alzheimer's Association  
1-800-272-3900  
[www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

For more information on Alzheimer's disease, related disorders, or the UAMS Memory Research Center, please contact:



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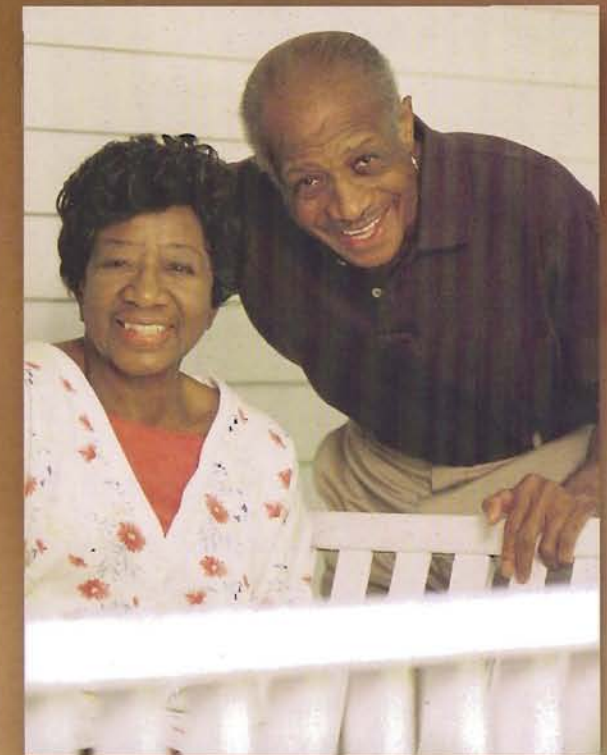
Or visit the  
UAMS Memory Research Center  
Web Site: <http://alzheimer.uams.edu>

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**Memory Research Center**  
(501) 526-5600 or 1-(866) 628-6001

# What African Americans Should Know About Memory Loss



**UAMS**



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES

# KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT MEMORY LOSS!!

As we get older, it is normal to have some mild memory changes. There are also minor problems in other types of brain function. However, if these losses do not affect a person's level of personal and social function, these symptoms are viewed as normal.

## What is dementia?

Dementia is a long-term, usually permanent condition that causes a slow decrease in brain function. The type of dementia will determine the type of problem experienced. For example, in Alzheimer's disease the brain function deficit is usually memory loss. Dementias can also cause speech or behavioral problems.

## What is Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. It often occurs in mid and late life. The person's memory, thinking, and behavior are affected because specific brain cells no longer work. As time passes, Alzheimer's disease steadily gets worse.



## WHAT ARE THE 10 WARNING SIGNS?

- Memory Loss
- Problems with daily activities
- Problems with words
- Confusion about time and place
- Poor or decreased judgement
- Problems with thinking
- Misplaces things
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Changes in personality
- Loss of initiative

## What else causes dementia besides Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's disease causes 60-80% of dementia. Severe depression may cause symptoms that look like dementia. It is important to be evaluated because symptoms associated with depression can be treated with medication.

Another condition, known as vascular dementia, can occur by itself or with Alzheimer's disease. Vascular dementia is associated with the occurrence of a stroke. The presenting symptoms depend on the area of the brain that was affected by the stroke.

## Why African Americans should be concerned about dementia...

A silent epidemic of Alzheimer's disease is looming among African Americans. Consider the following:

- Alzheimer's disease is more prevalent among African Americans than among Caucasians.
- African Americans have a 60% higher risk of type 2 diabetes - a condition that contributes directly to vascular disease.
- African Americans have a higher rate of vascular dementia than whites.
- Genetic and environmental risk factors for Alzheimer's disease seem different in African Americans. African Americans with dementia need to participate in research efforts to better understand these risk factors.
- African Americans tend to be diagnosed at a later stage of Alzheimer's disease - limiting the effectiveness of treatments. Most of the current drugs used in Alzheimer's disease work best early in the disease.