



Redwood Falls

# ACT on Alzheimer's NEWSLETTER

Volume 2

**In an effort to raise awareness, educate our community and reduce the stigma that surrounds Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, it is important to understand and be knowledgeable about the warning signs of Alzheimer's disease. Being aware and knowledgeable about Alzheimer's disease can help in early detection, support individuals with the disease and their families. It is one important component of being a dementia friendly community.**

Your memory often changes as you grow older. But memory loss that disrupts daily life is not a typical part of aging. It may be a symptom of dementia. Dementia is a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. The most common form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease.. The 10 potential signs of Alzheimer's disease are:

- **Memory Loss that disrupts daily life.** Forgetting recently learned information, important dates or events, asking the same information over and over.
- **Challenges in planning or solving problems.** Problems with balancing checkbook, following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills.
- **Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure.** Trouble driving to familiar location, managing a budget or remembering rules of a favorite game.
- **Confusion with time or place.** May lose track of dates, seasons and the passage of time. Have trouble understanding something if it is not happening immediately.
- **Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.** Difficulty reading, judging distance and determining color or contrast which may cause trouble with driving.
- **Trouble with following or joining a conversation.** May stop in the middle of a conversation and have no idea how to continue or may repeat themselves
- **Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps.**
- **Decrease or poor judgment.** May give large amounts of money to telemarketers.
- **Withdrawal from work or social activities**
- **Changes in mood and personality**

If you or someone you care about is experiencing any of the 10 warning signs, please see a doctor to find the cause. Early diagnosis gives you a chance to seek treatment and plan for the future. Information is available through the Alzheimer's Association. Call 1-800-272-3900 or check out their website at [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

*Resource: Alzheimer's Association® Know the 10 Warning Signs Early Detection Matters*



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## Early Diagnosis can help

ACT is doing a great job in getting the word out about the prevalence of dementia in our community. Instead of seeing a dementia diagnosis as a “shameful secret” it becomes a signal to seek assistance.

While no one wants to hear that they or their loved one has dementia, an early diagnosis is important to assist a person with dementia to get the help they need to thrive. It prevents unnecessary hospitalizations and helps patients and families plan for the future. Make an appointment with your local primary care provider if you’re worried that you or your loved one has symptoms of memory loss.

Below are some things you can do now if you are diagnosed:

- Give yourself time to accept this diagnosis
- Discuss results of memory evaluation with your doctor
- Get a second opinion if needed
- Ask lots of questions
- Call the Alzheimer’s Association 1-800-272-3900 for information on programs and services.
- Stay involved in the community.

For more information about the Redwood Falls ACT on Alzheimer’s or to become part of the ACT on Alzheimer’s Action Team, call or e-mail Karen Christensen, ACT on Alzheimer’s Coordinator at 507-627-1016 or [ace.redwood@co.redwood.mn.us](mailto:ace.redwood@co.redwood.mn.us)

Your input and assistance is valuable. Let’s ACT together as we work to create a dementia capable community.

