

NAVIGATING THE ALZHEIMER'S JOURNEY

From Early Changes to Later Stages

Alzheimer's is a disease that progresses over time, sometimes presenting with no symptoms at first, before subtle changes may begin to occur, like losing track of a conversation or pausing to find the right word.

Each person's experience is different, but understanding what to expect at different stages can help people make sense of what's happening, plan ahead and focus on what matters most along the way.

Earlier Stages

No cognitive symptoms

Changes in the brain linked to Alzheimer's can begin up to 20 years before symptoms appear. In the earlier stages of Alzheimer's, some people may be cognitively unimpaired and experience no symptoms.

Noticing changes and finding clarity

However, others living with the earlier stages of Alzheimer's may begin to notice cognitive impairment. With advances in detection and care, more people are learning about their Alzheimer's diagnosis earlier than ever before, giving them the opportunity to understand what's happening and what comes next.

Over time, people may begin to adapt in small but meaningful ways, using reminders, building routines or leaning on support from others to stay organized and on track.

This stage can also be a time to reflect on what matters most, both now and in the future. With the right information and support, people can move forward with greater intention.

Cognitive impairment may include:

- Forgetting names or recently learned information
- Repeating questions or losing track during conversations
- Misplacing items more often
- Having trouble finding the right words
- Stepping back from social activities or hobbies
- Finding it harder to manage tasks that require planning or organization

Many people are still able to:

- Stay engaged in relationships, hobbies and daily activities
- Focus on overall wellness and quality of life
- Make decisions about medical, financial and legal plans
- Build a support network and share their preferences for future care

Later Stages

Increasing support and continued connection

As the journey continues, changes may become more noticeable, and daily life may begin to look different for both individuals and those around them. More support from caregivers and loved ones may become part of daily life.

During these stages, support becomes an important part of daily life. With the help of caregivers and a strong support system, people can continue to take part in familiar routines and experience connection, comfort and meaningful moments.

Over time, care needs may increase. Loved ones and care teams play an essential role in providing support and maintaining dignity.

Changes to daily life can look like:

- Difficulty remembering personal history or familiar people
- Changes in personality or behavior
- Trouble communicating clearly or following conversations
- Less awareness of their surroundings
- Changes in physical abilities

No two people experience Alzheimer's the same way. Understanding what's happening and knowing where to find support can help people living with Alzheimer's and their loved ones navigate what comes next with greater clarity, connection and confidence.



To learn more about the earlier stages of Alzheimer's and hear from people living with the disease, visit **ThisisALZ.com**.

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SOURCES

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