5 Early Signs of Alzheimer's

- Poor judgement and decision making
- Inability to manage a budget
- Losing track of the date or season
- Difficulty having a conversation
- Sometimes forgetting which day it is and remembering later.

What's the Difference?

**Warning Signs of Alzheimer's:**
- Making a bad decision once in a while.
- Missing a monthly payment
- Forgetting which day it is and remembering later.
- Sometimes forgetting which word to use

**Typical Age-Related Changes:**
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Memory loss
- Confusion with time or place
- Difficulty having a conversation

The greatest known risk factor of Alzheimer's is increasing age.

Most individuals who have the disease are 65 or older. After the age of 65, the risk of Alzheimer's nearly doubles every year.

Other risk factors...

- Family history & genetics
- Alzheimer's is more likely in women
- Smoking

Prevention

- Mental stimulation
- Eat a balanced diet, like the Mediterranean diet
- Be physically and socially active
- Stress management

Sources: Alz.org, MayoClinic.org, StanfordHealthcare.org
Am I at Risk?

Risk increases with age
But age is not a direct cause. Most individuals with the disease are age 65+. In rare cases, younger individuals can also be affected as early as age 40.

2/3 of people with Alzheimer’s are women
However, the relationship between biological sex and Alzheimer's risk is still unclear.

Family history and certain genes are related to an increased risk of Alzheimer’s but not everyone who has one or more of these genes will develop the disease.

Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol have all been associated with a higher risk of developing the disease.

Race and Ethnicity can also play a role in the risk of developing Alzheimer's
Compared to white individuals:
- Members of the Latinx community: 1.5x more at risk
- Members of the African American community: 2x more at risk

Stages of Alzheimer's

Pre-Clinical Stage
At this stage of Alzheimer’s Disease, there are no clinically apparent symptoms and the stage may last for years.

Mild Cognitive Impairment
At this stage you can see changes in thinking, judgment, and memory.

Mild Dementia
Alzheimer's Disease is commonly diagnosed at this stage. They may experience memory loss of recent events, difficulty problem solving and expressing themselves, and may begin to socially withdraw.

Moderate Dementia
At this stage people show worsening confusion, memory and may need help with daily activities.

Severe Dementia
People tend to lose speaking abilities, require assistance with personal care and experience a decline in physical abilities.
What is Alzheimer's?

Degeneration of brain neurons & the presence of protein tangles and plaques in three main areas of the brain.

**Most common type of dementia**
- Not a common effect of aging
- Causes are not fully known

Racial and ethnic differences

- African Americans: 14%
- Hispanics: 12%
- Non-Hispanic Whites: 10%

**Overview**

- Intelligence, judgment, and behavior (Frontal lobe)
- Memory (Temporal lobe)
- Language (Parietal lobe)

**Signs & Symptoms**

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- Challenges in planning & problem solving
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusion with place or time
- Changes in mood or personality
- Trouble with visual images & spatial relationships
- New problems with spoken or written words
- Decreased or poor judgement
- Misplacing things & inability to retrace steps
- Withdrawal from work or social activities

**Individuals can experience one or more of these signs in varying degrees!**

**Prevention**

- **Exercise**
  - Aerobic exercises
  - Ex: walking, playing soccer

- Healthy diet
  - Mediterranean diet — rich in vegetables, fruits, and lean protein, particularly protein sources containing omega-3 fatty acids.

- Regular sleep

- Social engagement

- Mental stimulation

- Avoid smoking and alcohol consumption

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**Typical age-related changes**

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** KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!**

**Alzheimer's warning signs vs Typical age-related changes**

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