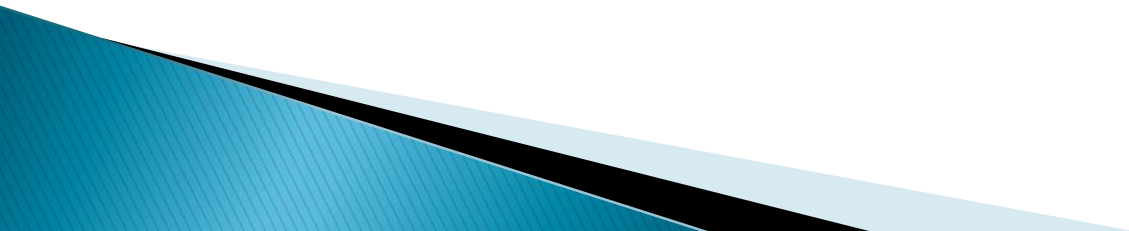


# Alzheimer's Disease

Deputy Dave Cappel  
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# What is Alzheimer's Disease?



# Dementia

- ▶ “Dementia” is an umbrella term describing a variety of diseases and conditions that develop when nerve cells in the brain die or no longer function normally. The death or malfunction of these nerve cells, called neurons, causes changes in one’s memory, behavior and ability to think clearly



# Dementia

- ▶ Diagnosis based on criteria in DSM-IV
- ▶ Symptoms include decline in memory and at least one cognitive ability:
  - Ability to generate coherent speech
  - Ability to understand spoken or written language
  - Ability to recognize or identify objects
  - Ability to execute motor activities
- ▶ Dementia is not a mental illness
- ▶ Is diagnosed by type and severity



# Alzheimer's Disease

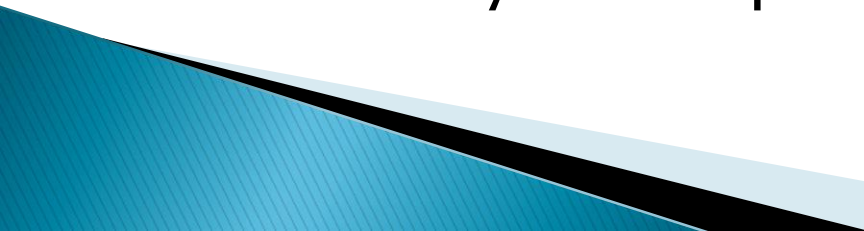
- ▶ First identified more than 100 years ago by a German physician
- ▶ Origin is still unknown
- ▶ Develops as a result of changes in the brain
- ▶ Factors can begin as many as 20 years before symptoms appear
- ▶ Neuronal damage in brain is permanent
- ▶ Proposed changes for diagnosis are being evaluated through ongoing research

# Signs of Alzheimer's Disease

- ▶ Challenges in planning or solving problems.
- ▶ Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure.
- ▶ Confusion with time or place.
- ▶ Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.
- ▶ New problems with words in speaking or writing.
- ▶ Memory loss disrupts daily life
- ▶ Changes in mood and personality



## How Alzheimer's Affects Safety

- ▶ **Judgment:** forgetting how to use household appliances
  - ▶ **Sense of time and place:** getting lost on one's own street; being unable to recognize or find familiar areas in the home
  - ▶ **Behavior:** becoming easily confused, suspicious or fearful
  - ▶ **Physical ability:** having trouble with balance; depending upon a walker or wheelchair to get around
  - ▶ **Senses:** experiencing changes in vision, hearing, sensitivity to temperatures or depth perception
- 

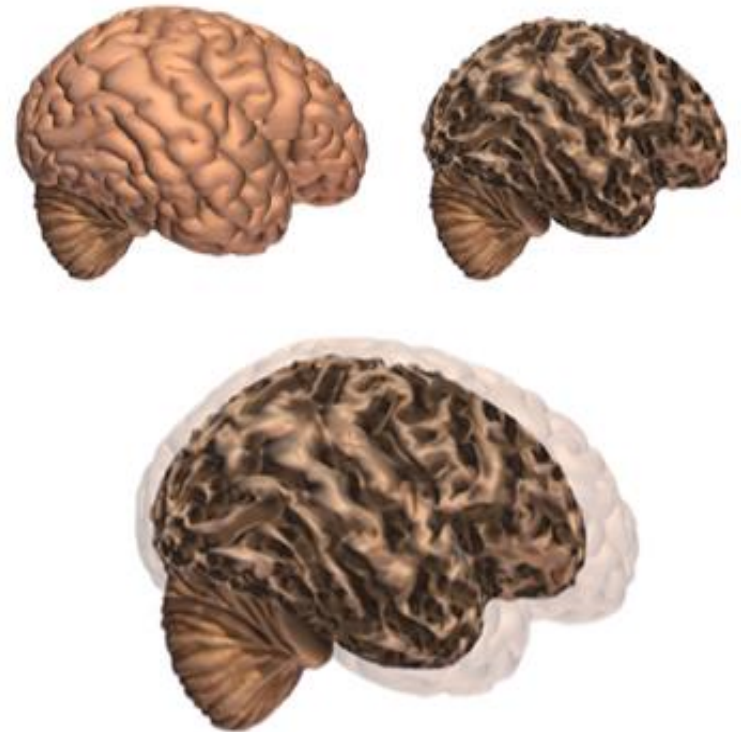
# Alarming Statistics

- ▶ Approximately 5.4 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's Disease
- ▶ Approximately 15 million people provide care for affected individuals
- ▶ Cost for care/treatment estimated to approach 200 Billion for 2012
- ▶ Affects both men and women, across all economic and racial boundaries
- ▶ 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the U.S.

Alzheimer's Association, 2012 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures, *Alzheimer's & Dementia, Volume 8, Issue 2*

# Who is Affected?

- ▶ 3.4 Million Women
- ▶ 1.4 Million Men
- ▶ 80% living alone or with family caregivers
- ▶ Home care \$168/day
- ▶ Adult day center \$70/day
- ▶ Assisted living \$41,000/year
- ▶ Nursing home \$78,000/year



# Wandering

- ▶ Six in 10 people with dementia will wander. A person with Alzheimer's may not remember his or her name or address, and can become disoriented, even in familiar places. Wandering among people with dementia is dangerous, but there are strategies and services to help prevent it.



# Possible Wandering Warning Signs

- ▶ Returns from a regular walk or drive later than usual
- ▶ Tries to fulfill former obligations, such as going to work
- ▶ Tries or wants to "go home," even when at home
- ▶ Is restless, paces or makes repetitive movements
- ▶ Has difficulty locating familiar places like the bathroom, bedroom or dining room
- ▶ Asks the whereabouts of current or past friends and family
- ▶ Acts as if doing a hobby or chore, but nothing gets done (e.g., moves around pots and dirt without actually planting anything)
- ▶ Appears lost in a new or changed environment



# Search and Rescue

- ▶ Make contact with complainant, search residence
  - ▶ Get a thorough description, clothing etc.
  - ▶ Coordinate a perimeter
  - ▶ Assess physical ability, modes of transportation
  - ▶ Ask about daily routines
  - ▶ Ask about preoccupation with places or people
- 
- ▶ 94% are found within 1.5 miles
  - ▶ Assess nearby hazards



# Search and Rescue cont.

- ▶ The national average for a search is 9 hours at an estimated cost of \$1500/hour
- ▶ If subject is not found within 24 hours, increased risk for death or serious injury
  - 14% the time are they found on the road
  - 28% of the time in a creek / drainage
  - 33% of the time caught in briars or brush
- ▶ The key point is to remember you need to enter their reality – they cannot enter into yours.



# Additional Thoughts

A person with Alzheimer's will continue to wander until....

- ▶ They are stopped by an obstacle
- ▶ They get injured and can't physically go on

## Remember...

- ▶ The average person can walk **4 miles per hour**. An Alzheimer's patient in fairly good shape can cover same ground

# Available Resources

- ▶ [MedicAlert® + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return®](#) is a nationwide identification program designed to save lives by facilitating the safe return of those who wander.
- ▶ [Comfort Zone®](#) and [Comfort Zone Check-In®](#) allows families to monitor a person with dementia's whereabouts remotely using Web-based location services.



# HCSO Resources

- ▶ By combining LoJack's time-tested electronic tracking and rescue equipment with this client information database and proven training and procedures for law enforcement and public safety agencies, SafetyNet is the most effective solution for rescuing wandering or lost individuals with Alzheimer's, autism and other cognitive disorders.



# SafetyNet™

by LO/JACK®

