

alzheimer's  association®

Midlands Chapter

Perspectives


Research · Care · Prevention

April 2011 Issue Serving Northeast Nebraska & Southwest Iowa

On Wednesday, April 27th • 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.


Join us at the Midlands Chapter office as we say thanks, honor and celebrate our past, present and future volunteers!

Refreshments, beverages and lots of appreciation will be served.

alzheimer's  association®

Midlands Chapter
1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 205
Omaha, NE

Please RSVP to Alisha Palagi at
apalagi@midlandsalz.org
or call her at 402.502.4301
by Monday, April 25th



Ride
to
Remember



alzheimer's  association®
Midlands Chapter

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

SATURDAY, MAY 21st

Watch our [web page](#) for more information coming SOON!!!

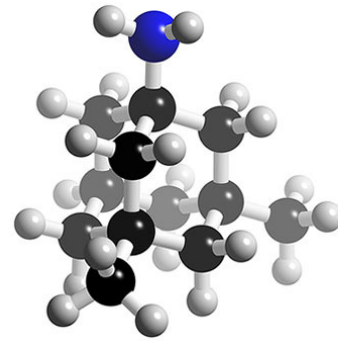
Memantine and Mild Alzheimer's

Memantine, a drug approved to treat moderate-to-severe Alzheimer's, appears to be ineffective in the mild stages of the disease, a new study shows.

A meta-analysis of previously published or presented research results and company data about the drug memantine has been published online by the journal Archives of Neurology. Memantine is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for treatment of moderate-to-severe Alzheimer's disease.

The authors found that there "was no evidence for the efficacy of memantine in the subset of patients with mild (Alzheimer's disease) on any of the outcomes in any trial or when statistically combined." They added that "despite its frequent off-label use, evidence is lacking for the benefit of memantine in mild (Alzheimer's disease)."

The state of clinical medicine now is that anticholinesterase drugs and memantine are often prescribed together, despite little or no evidence that the combination is useful.



RESPIRE CARE GRANTS

Available Through the Midlands Chapter



*We're here to
help and
offer hope.
All day.
Every day.*

Making an application for Respite Care is as easy as 1, 2, 3 . . .

1. Log on to www.alz.org/midlands, find the Respite Grant Application form and print it.
2. Return the completed Application Form to the Midlands Chapter either by mail, fax to 402.502.7001 or bring it to our office at 1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 205, Omaha, NE.
3. You will be contacted by Chapter staff when the application and approval process is complete.

[Please go to our web site to download an application TODAY!](#)

Understanding Challenging Behaviors

By Clayton Freeman, Program Director

One of the most common questions asked at caregiver events, in our professional training sessions and through our helpline is related to behaviors. Alzheimer's disease and other dementias can cause a person to act in different and unpredictable ways. It is important to understand that the person may not act out on purpose. In many cases the behavior is related to an unmet need. The person is attempting to communicate and caregivers need tools to respond. **This month, our focus is on, Sleeplessness and Sundowning.**

Sleeping problems experienced by individuals with Alzheimer's and caregiver exhaustion are two of the most common reasons people with Alzheimer's are eventually placed in nursing homes. Some studies indicate that as many as 20 percent of persons with Alzheimer's will, at some point, experience periods of increased confusion, anxiety, agitation and disorientation beginning at dusk and continuing throughout the night.

While experts are not certain how or why these behaviors occur, many attribute them to late-day confusion, or "sundowning," caused by the following factors:

- end-of-day exhaustion (mental and physical)
- an upset in the "internal body clock," causing a biological mix-up between day and night



- reduced lighting and increased shadows
- disorientation due to the inability to separate dreams from reality when sleeping
- less need for sleep, which is common among older adults

Tips for reducing evening agitation and nighttime sleeplessness:

- **Plan more active days.** A person who rests most of the day is likely to be awake at night. Discourage afternoon napping and plan activities, such as taking a walk, or going for a drive.
- **Monitor diet.** Restrict sweets and caffeine consumption to the morning hours. Serve dinner early, and offer only a light meal before bedtime.
- **Seek medical advice.** Physical ailments, such as bladder or incontinence problems, could be making it difficult to sleep. Your doctor may also be able to prescribe medication to help the person relax at night.
- **Change sleeping arrangements.** Allow the person to sleep in a different bedroom, in a favorite chair or wherever it's most comfortable. Also, keep the room partially lit to reduce agitation that occurs when surroundings are dark or unfamiliar. Try to do the same things each night before bed, such as watching TV or listening to music.

Nighttime restlessness doesn't last forever. It typically peaks in the middle stages, then diminishes as the disease progresses. In the meantime, caregivers should make sure their home is safe and secure, especially if the person with Alzheimer's wanders. Restrict access to certain rooms or levels by closing and locking doors, and install tall safety gates between rooms. Door sensors and motion detectors can be used to alert family members when a person is wandering.

Once the person is awake and upset, experts suggest that caregivers:

- approach their loved one in a calm manner
- find out if there is something he or she needs
- gently remind him or her of the time
- avoid arguing or asking for explanations
- offer reassurance that everything is all right and everyone is safe

If you have questions or concerns about your loved one's sleeplessness or sundowning, The Midlands Chapter Help-Line at **1.800.272.3900** is available 24/7 to provide assistance with behavioral issues, related to care-giving, upcoming educational events and information on Chapter services. Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter | 1941 South 42nd Street | Suite 205 | Omaha | NE | 68105 www.alz.org/midlands



**Planned Giving:
Good That Grows Beyond a Lifetime**

by Allison Brown-Corson, Development Director, Midlands Chapter

It's wonderful to see the good that you can do. It's even better to know that the good will continue to grow beyond your lifetime. That's the beauty of planned giving through to Alzheimer's Association® Midlands Chapter. There are many ways you can leave a legacy to sustain the education and research for Alzheimer's, while at the same time providing yourself and your family (or other beneficiaries) with significant tax benefits. In addition to outright, tax-deductible cash gifts, there are other creative ways to give, including:

- Gifts of stock or other assets
- A bequest in your Will
- A beneficiary designation on a life
- Life Income Gifts
- Insurance policy, 401(k) plan or IRA
- Charitable Lead Trusts

Planned gifts can offer many advantages to help you to meet your overall financial goals, and help the Alzheimer's Association® Midlands Chapter in its long-term financial planning. They can also provide special opportunities that enable the organization to strengthen and improve its programs.

Please be advised that the information provided by Alzheimer's Association® Midlands Chapter is not intended as tax or legal advice, but as accurate and authoritative general information on Planned Giving. For legal advice, please consult with your attorney and/or tax advisor.

Charitable Giving Legislation

New legislation has extended a [special charitable giving opportunity](#) for individuals to use funds from their IRA's for charitable giving through 2011 and 2012. People age 70½ years and older can transfer up to \$100,000 of IRA assets each year to public charities without triggering federal income taxes today or estate tax in the future.

Remembering Mom

This Mother's Day, let's remember our mother, grandmother, aunt, wife, sister and any special woman in our lives by making a gift to the Alzheimer's Association® Midlands Chapter. It's as easy as hitting the donate button.

Donate Now

Your thoughtful gift will help the Midlands Chapter to provide much needed programs and services to those individuals diagnosed with the disease, their caregivers and families.

24/7 Helpline: 800.272.3900

www.alz.org/midlands



"All that I am, or hope to be,
I owe to my angel mother."

—Abraham Lincoln

Researchers Discover Five New Alzheimer's disease Genes

Two very large studies, appearing as advance, online publications of [Nature Genetics](#), identified five additional genes linked to Alzheimer's, doubling the number of genes believed to contribute to the disease.

The amount of genetic risk attributable to each of these newly identified genes is not large, but they may help point researchers to new ideas for the causes and/or mechanisms underlying this devastating and fatal disease.

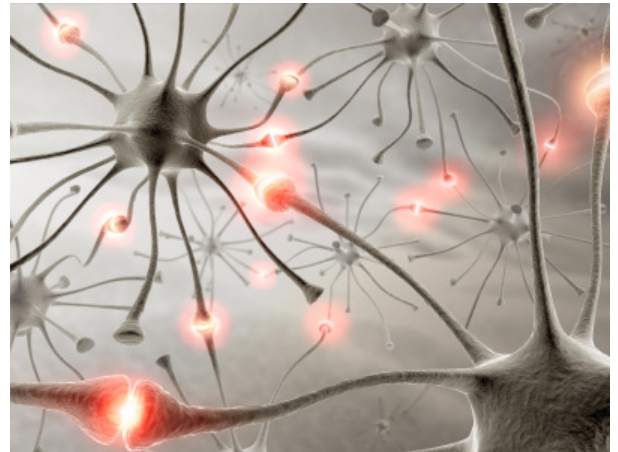
The APOE gene remains the strongest genetic risk factor for Alzheimer's disease. One study by U.S. researchers analyzed the genes of 54,000 people, some with Alzheimer's and others of the same age without the disease, and found four new genes. The other study, from mostly European scientists, confirmed the U.S. research and added an additional gene. The studies also confirmed the previous Alzheimer's genes, making 10 genes associated with Alzheimer's in the elderly.

Alzheimer's Association Involvement

The recently announced Alzheimer's disease genetics discoveries were done, in part, by the International Genomics of Alzheimer's Project (IGAP) - a collaboration formed to discover and map the genes that contribute to Alzheimer's disease. IGAP, spanning universities from both Europe and the United States, combines the knowledge, staff and resources of four consortia that conduct research on Alzheimer's disease genetics.

The formation of IGAP is supported by the Alzheimer's Association and the Foundation Plan Alzheimer. The primary goal of IGAP is to completely understand the role inheritance plays in Alzheimer's disease. To achieve this goal, IGAP will work to identify all the genes that contribute to the risk of developing this disease.

The Alzheimer's Association also partners with the National Institute on Aging on the National Alzheimer's Disease Genetics Study, a federal initiative to collect and bank blood samples from families with several members who developed Alzheimer's disease late in life. The goal is to identify additional Alzheimer's risk genes. The study continues to [seek participants](#)



Midlands Chapter Wishlist

The Alzheimer's Association® Midlands Chapter welcomes donations of gifts in kind from our donors. Your generosity helps fulfill our mission and can provide a valuable tax deduction for you. Currently, the Chapter has need of the following items:

- Flat screen television for educational programs and presentations
- Board room chairs
- Brochure rack for the Family Resource Room
- Folding machine
- Portable flip chart and stand
- Digital camera
- Frequent Flyer Miles for Staff
- A vehicle for staff travel
- Financial Support for the Respite Care Reimbursement Program
- Financial Support for the Community Education Fund

Maintain Your Brain

by Rosalie Shepherd, MS, Educator

In 1936 a group of scientist and doctors presented Congress with a dire warning from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Over farming, burning the soil with pesticides and fertilizer had all but depleted the soil of trace minerals needed for optimum health. The doctors called upon Congress to act. Unfortunately, Congress took no action.

How important are minerals to good health? Take zinc for example. According to Ophthalmologist Dr. Edward Kondrot, Healing the Eye Vision Therapy and Restoration, most of his patients that have vision problems are zinc deficient. "The importance of zinc for vision cannot be overstated, but it turns out that zinc is a cofactor for over 500 biochemical reactions in the body as well, most of them happening in the brain." says Dr. Kondrot. That means your brain health, such as memory, focus, mood and your senses all depend on zinc.

Our taste buds also need zinc, and it is needed for proper digestion as well. If food doesn't taste like it should, it could be zinc deficiency. Doctors can test for zinc with the Zinc Tally Taste test. I recently took that test, and the good news is that I am not deficient in zinc. The bad news is that the test drops taste like you swallowed a mouthful of metal-not pleasant. I passed the test, but if you cannot taste that zinc flavor, then you are deficient in the mineral.

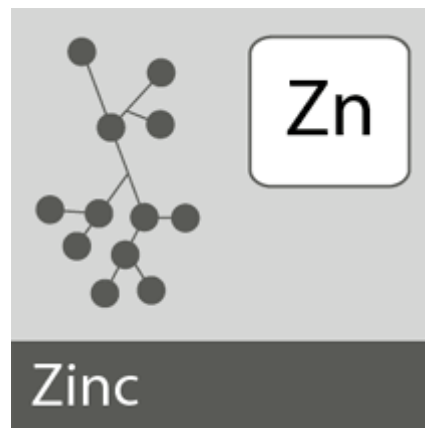
The most common cause of zinc deficiency is stress. While exercise is very good for brain and body, zinc is lost while sweating, and should be replenished by eating foods or taking zinc supplements. Following are some symptoms that indicate you could be zinc deficient:

- Attention difficulties and memory issues
- Decreased appetite and meat avoidance
- Decreased taste and smell
- Insomnia and poor sleep habits (zinc is needed to make melatonin)
- Depression and pain

It is difficult to get zinc from food sources, and if you are vegetarian you are more likely to be deficient. According to Dr. Kondrot, Zinc is not found in the typical diet. However, following are foods high in zinc.

- Wheat germ and cocoa powder
- Oysters, veal liver, lamb and lean roast beef
- Tahini, peanuts, dried pumpkin, squash and watermelon seeds

Today we are feeling the effects of the eroding mineral content in the soil. The U.S.D.A. reports that vitamin and mineral content for fruits and vegetables have plummeted in just 30 years. The University of Texas at Austin has been tracking the decline of nutrients in produce across the board, and found significant drops in Vitamin C and B2. For more information on the benefits of zinc you may contact info@healingtheeye.com





Please Share Our e-Newsletter

Please forward or share our monthly e-newsletter *Perspectives*. Click on the "[Forward e-mail](#)" link at the very bottom of this e-mail to share *Perspectives* with other friends and families and invite them to receive our newsletter each month or get involved. They can click the "[Join Our Mailing List](#)" link in the left column and receive *Perspectives* each month, along with helpful tips, advice, and updates on Chapter events and programs.

facebook

Join Us on Facebook & LinkedIn

Stay up-to-date with the latest events and activities at the Midlands Chapter!
Follow us on [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#) **TODAY!!**

LinkedIn

Congratulations and THANK YOU

to the following community facilities who have recently completed modules within our **Foundations of Dementia Care** training program:

St. Joseph Villa
Omaha, NE

★

SilverRidge Assisted Living and Memory Support
Gretna, NE

If you are interested in finding out more about our **Foundations of Dementia Care** training program for healthcare professionals and care workers, please contact **Clayton Freeman** by [e-mail](#) or **call 402.502.4301 for more information TODAY!**

OUR VISION:
A world without Alzheimer's.

OUR MISSION: To eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.