

Health and Medicine 2025



The 7 stages of Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive and debilitating condition that slowly robs a person of their memories and personality. Alzheimer's disease is a form of dementia that produces various symptoms that occur in stages, ultimately arriving at a point when a person can no longer live independently due to cognitive decline.

The Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation says there are seven clinical stages of Alzheimer's. Stages 1 through 3 are the pre-dementia stages, while stages 4 through 7 are the dementia stages. Here is a close look at what these stages entail, according to the Global Deterioration Scale.

Stage 1

There is no cognitive decline, nor noticeable symptoms.

Stage 2

A person may experience very mild cognitive decline. This can include one feeling like he or she is having memory lapses, but

no symptoms of dementia can be detected by others, including medical professionals.

Stage 3

During stage 3, mild cognitive decline begins to become noticeable. Friends, family or coworkers begin to notice difficulties, which may include problems coming up with the right words or names; trouble remembering names; greater difficulty performing tasks; and losing or misplacing a valuable object.

Stage 4

A careful medical interview should reveal symptoms of moderate cognitive decline. Forgetfulness of recent events; difficulty performing complex tasks like planning a meal for guests or paying bills; forgetfulness about one's own personal history; and becoming moody or withdrawn are possible.

Stage 5

Cognitive decline continues to progress to where it becomes moderately severe. Gaps in memory are noticeable and individuals likely

will need help with everyday activities. Some may be unable to recall their addresses or telephone numbers, while others may be confused about the day or where they are. Stage 5 is usually the stage when a person can no longer live without assistance.

Stage 6

Very severe memory loss, loss of communication skills and inability to recognize loved ones occurs during the severe cognitive decline stage. One will need total care.

Stage 7

This is the end-stage of the disease and is marked by profound cognitive impairment. Loss of mobility and effective communication typically occurs at this stage.

It's important to note that these stages are general guidelines of what can be expected as Alzheimer's disease progresses. Symptoms may vary among different people, and not everyone with Alzheimer's will progress through these stages at the same rate.

FAQ about diabetes

Diabetes cases have risen dramatically in recent decades. According to the World Health Organization, the number of people living with diabetes has more than quadrupled since 1990, rising from 200 million that year to 830 million by 2022.

The prevalence of diabetes underscores how significant a threat it poses across the globe. And recognition of that prevalence may prompt questions about the disease, including what can be done to prevent it.

What is diabetes?

The WHO notes diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or the body cannot effectively utilize the insulin that is produced. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that's problematic because insulin acts like a key to let blood sugar into the body's cells for use as energy.

Are there different types of diabetes?

Yes. The CDC notes type 1 diabetes is typically diagnosed in children and young adults, though it's important people recognize it can be diagnosed at any age. Type 1 diabetes is believed to be caused by an autoimmune reaction that stops the body from making insulin. People with type 1 diabetes must take insulin every day to survive.

Type 2 diabetes is characterized by an inability to utilize insulin well and maintain normal blood sugar levels. Though the CDC notes more and more young people are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, the disease is more often diagnosed in adults and tends to develop over many years.



Gestational diabetes is another form of the disease that can develop in pregnant women who have never had diabetes. Gestational diabetes typically goes away after giving birth, but the CDC notes a baby could be at elevated risk for health problems like childhood obesity or type 2 diabetes if a mother develops gestational diabetes during pregnancy.

Are there risk factors for diabetes?

Risk factors vary for each type of diabetes. The risk factors for type 1 diabetes include family history, notably a first degree relative (i.e., parent or sibling) who has the disease, and age since most cases are diagnosed in childhood or adolescence. Age also is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes, as the CDC notes most diagnoses of the disease are made in people age 45 and older. Risk for type 2 diabetes also is greater if a person has a first-degree relative with the condition, but that might be because families tend to live similar lifestyles relating to diet and exercise. A poor diet can increase type 2 diabetes risk, as overweight or obesity are risk factors for the disease. A sedentary lifestyle in which

people are physically active less than three times per week also is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes.

What are the signs and symptoms of diabetes?

The WHO reports symptoms of diabetes may occur suddenly but also notes that they can take years to be noticed in people with type 2 diabetes. But some of the more notable symptoms include:

- Feeling very thirsty
- Need for frequent urination
- Blurred vision
- Fatigue
- Unintentional weight loss

The Kovler Diabetes Center at UChicagoMedicine notes that tingling or numbness in the hands or feet, a condition known as neuropathy, also may indicate the presence of diabetes. This occurs over time because high glucose levels can damage the nervous system. Delayed healing of bruises or cuts or frequent infections also can be signs of diabetes.

Diabetes cases are on the rise across the globe, which only underscores the need for everyone to learn more about the disease and what can be done to prevent it.

The benefits of getting your flu shot



Cooler temperatures bring many things, including the arrival of fun and festive holidays. But flu season also kicks into high gear between the months of December and February.

Although flu season runs from October to May, a combination of factors during the chilliest months of winter, such as increased time indoors in close proximity to others who may be ill, tends to escalate the rates of flu infection. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says cold, dry conditions make it easier for the virus to spread.

Individuals can take different steps to reduce their risk of contracting the flu, which includes frequent handwashing, keeping a distance from others who are sick and eating a healthy diet to help boost the immune system. Getting an annual flu shot is another notable and highly beneficial strategy to beat the flu.

Reduces risk of getting the flu

The primary reason to get a flu shot is to train the body's immune system to recognize and fight off the most common strains of influenza anticipated in a given year. During seasons when the shot is a good match, individuals who get it can reduce their risk of flu contraction by 40 to 60 percent.

Lessens severity of the flu

For those who do get the flu, being vaccinated means the illness is likely to be less severe than it might be for those who are not vaccinated.

Prevents serious conditions

The flu can be dangerous

to vulnerable populations, but the virus also can lead to health problems like inflammation of the heart or brain, pneumonia, or the worsening of conditions like asthma and diabetes. By getting the vaccine, one can reduce their risk of these serious outcomes.

Offers protection to pregnant women

Pregnancy increases risks posed by the flu. The flu shot can reduce the chances of flu-related hospitalization for pregnant women. Also, the mother's

antibodies to the flu will be passed to the fetus, helping to protect the newborn baby for several months during a time when the infant is too young to be vaccinated.

Protects kids

A flu vaccine can significantly reduce a child's risk of pediatric intensive care unit admission and even death from the illness.

The idea of getting pricked by a needle isn't pleasant, but a flu vaccine is an important tool in building immunity to a common wintertime foe.

Did you know?

Crohn's disease is an inflammatory bowel disease that affects millions of people across the globe, and the prevalence of Crohn's and other IBDs is on the rise, particularly among young people. A 2019 study published in The Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology found that between six and eight million people across the globe had some type of IBD in 2017, but those figures may rise given

recent findings of researchers behind a study funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That study, released in late 2024 and led by researchers at the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Pennsylvania, found instances of Crohn's disease rose by 22 percent among the pediatric population between 2009 and 2020.



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