

HEALTHLINE

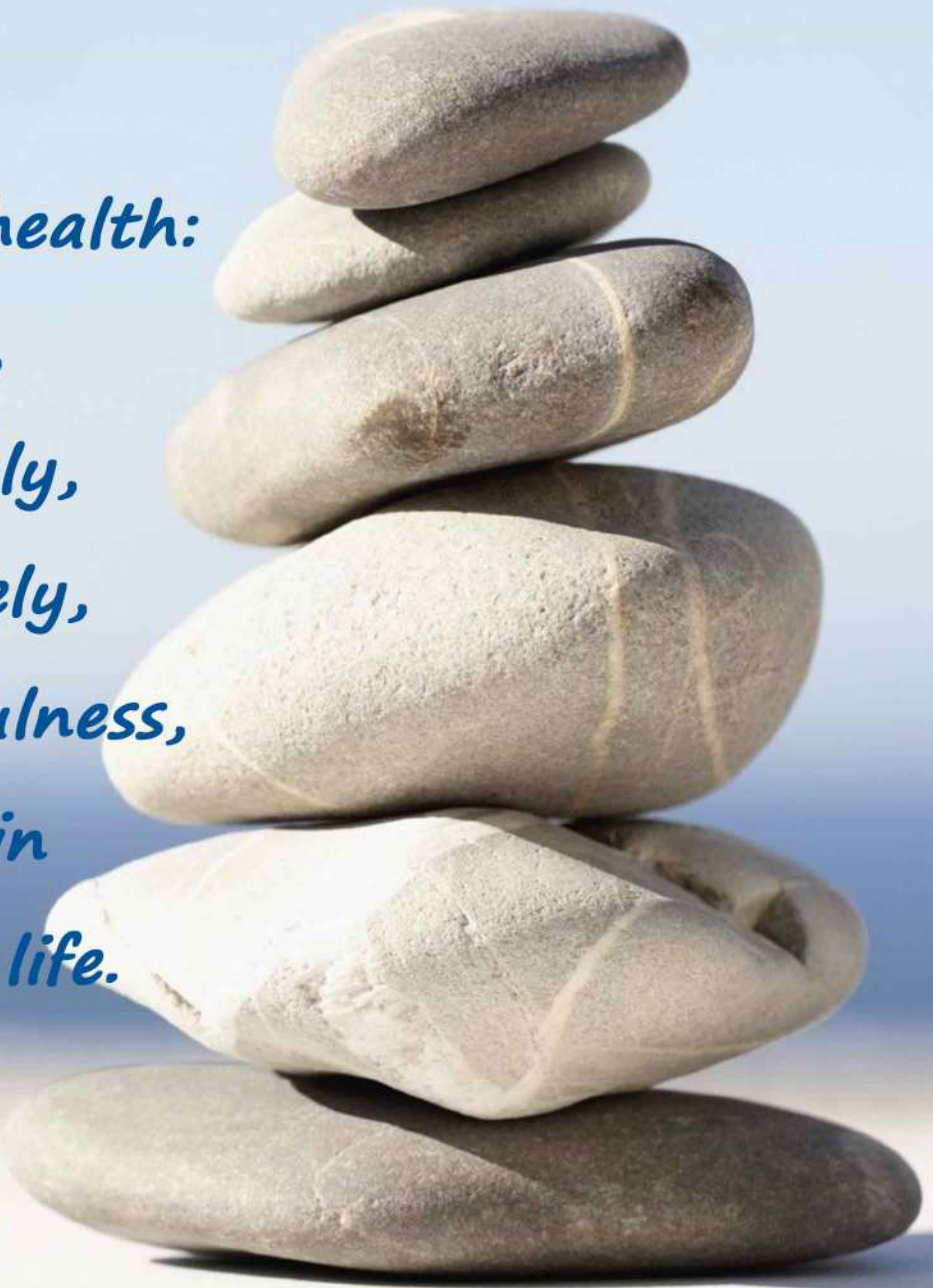
Paramount's Monthly Magazine

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*To ensure good health:
eat lightly,
breathe deeply,
live moderately,
cultivate cheerfulness,
and maintain
an interest in life.*

— ” —

William Londen



Alzheimer's
awareness
month

Responsible
care-giving

Nutritional
tips for the
season

Brain
exercises

Alzheimer's Awareness Month

Alzheimer's is a mental health disorder in which the cognitive skills are affected with age. It is known to be one of the most common forms of dementia and there is no cure for it. The disease develops slowly and it is caused due to the inability of communication between the damaged neurons in the brain. These damaged neurons eventually affect memory, mood, behaviour, cognitive thinking and learning and even physical functions like walking or even swallowing.

Some early signs and symptoms to be aware of:



Memory loss that starts disrupting daily life. This involves forgetting important events or dates, inability to remember tasks/chores and relying on written notes, asking for the same information over and over again.



Difficulty in solving problems and challenges, like paying the bills, solving puzzles, concentrating.

Confused about time and place. Forgetting the date or where you are and how you go there.



Problem in speaking or writing.



Social withdrawal.



Difficulty in understanding visual imagery; like problems in reading or judging distances while driving or otherwise.



Difficulty in completing everyday tasks like driving.



Change in mood and personality; being more suspicious, anxious, depressed.

Diagnosis and treatment :

When the above symptoms become apparent, it is important to seek medical help and diagnosis immediately. Unfortunately, there is no treatment to cure the disease, however there are a lot of ways in which symptoms can be managed. This makes living with Alzheimer's much easier and manageable. Here are some ways in which the symptoms can be managed:

Get a team of experts: Speak to mental health professionals, occupational and speech therapists, physical therapists, nutritionists and any other experts you think that may be needed. These professionals will work towards making every day life manageable as much as possible. Also be sure to have a trusted professional who can help you through practical matters like finance, making of will and such. These are important things to consider as the disease should not be a reason to tarnish your life's work and worth.

Get medical help: Treat the neurophyschiatric symptoms with the help of a professional; with or without medication.

Exercise as much as possible: According to research, regular physical exercise can help in slowing down the progress of the disease so it is manageable for a longer period of time.

Get good sleep: This may sound like non-medical advice, but it is studied that a good night's sleep helps in keeping our brain more relaxed and focused. Poor sleep may accelerate the severity of the symptoms of the disease.

Join a support group: It is important to be a part of a support group that understands the difficulties that come with living with Alzheimer's. Having supportive friends and family are a big plus, but these professionally curated support groups may help voice and address concerns that otherwise may go missed.

Responsible Care-Giving

It is difficult for a care-giver to see their loved one live through a disease that alters their memory and ability to perform simple daily tasks. It is important to have a supportive care-giving environment and here are some ways that the John Hopkins Medicine Journal suggests what the care-givers can do:



1 Encourage independence. This is particularly important in the early stages of the disease, when a person may still function quite well. So treat him as an adult, not a child, and give him as much independence as possible.

2 Set structure. A scheduled day that provides activities for people with AD helps manage and even prevent neuropsychiatric symptoms, such as agitation and depression.

3 Be your loved one's memory. It's up to you to remember appointments, words or names, people and places. Gently remind your loved one of these things when appropriate, but don't embarrass them. You'll also need to become (or appoint) the person who remembers medications and manages your loved one's finances.

4 Listen. The frustration, depression, anxiety and anger that come with an AD diagnosis and the disease's prognosis are tremendous. Be there to listen. But make sure you have your own support system that helps you with your frustrations and anger.

5 Live in the day. You can't change what happened yesterday, and you can't predict what will happen tomorrow. But you can enjoy the time you have with your loved one today.

6 Reduce your expectations. If you keep expecting your loved one to remember tasks, things you said and people's names, you will be disappointed. However, if you don't expect this and he does remember these things, you will be pleasantly surprised.

While it is important to take care of the one living through the disease, the care-giver themselves must give their mental health importance and cater to their own mental and emotional needs.

NUTRITIONAL TIPS FOR THE SEASON

Drink '**wala root**' infused water. (Also called Khus root)

- Add a bunch of wala root in your water source and use it for 3 days.
- You can add it in your earthen pot, your glass bottle, or even just your glass in which you drink water.
- As mentioned, you can use this particular bunch of roots for 3 days.
- After 3 days, let it dry in the sun for a day.
- You can then use it again for 3 more days in your water source.



After the second use, you can then put these roots in your bathing bucket and let it infuse for a couple of hours and take a bath in the same water for 2-3 days. If you still want to continue using it, you can sundry the roots again, make it into a coil/bunch and use it as a loofah on your body for some exfoliation on the skin.

Since this is a plant source, you can easily place it back into the soil and let it decompose and nourish the soil.

Benefits of this infused water:



Helps in keeping your body temperature down.



Gets rid of body odour.



Curbs sugar cravings.



Helps in keeping acne in check.

*Info courtesy: Rujuta Diwekar.

LOCAL AND SEASONAL FRUITS



Iced apple



Mangoes



Watermelons

It is very important to consider eating local and seasonal food that is available in the market. It helps build immunity in the body and also you are sure to be eating the right produce at the right time. These seasonal foods also serve a purpose like providing the necessary nutrients that are important for the body. Iced apple helps keep your mind and body cool during the summers, watermelon provides the much needed hydration and mangoes helps in alkalising the body.



As we age, our brain starts aging too, which can lead to a handful of complications. In order to keep your brain healthy, it is important to exercise it in the right manner. Here are some examples to try that will help with mental stimulation and keep this important organ happy and healthy!



Jigsaw puzzle: This needs a multiple of cognitive abilities which means the brain is working and coordinating. An important aspect of mental health.

Playing cards: Some studies suggest that a card game can also help with memory skills and thinking ability.



Building vocabulary: This can be done by reading more. It can be a short novel, comics, newspapers, magazine, whatever you would like.

Dancing: This fun activity can actually help your brain's ability to remember and process things. Try salsa, zumba, hip-hop or any form other of dancing that you may like.



Learn a new skill: This is both exciting and challenging. Exactly the kind of exercise your brain needs! Learn to play an instrument or speak a new language, or practice a new exercise form like yoga, Muay Thai, karate or anything that excites your interest.

For any queries/feedback/suggestions for the magazine, kindly write to us at corp.comm@paramount.healthcare

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