

Dementia and memory loss essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



Dementia and Memory Loss Expository Essay By: Brett Barker Date: August 9, 2009 Dementia and Memory Loss In today's world, there are many people that have been diagnosed with dementia or some sort of memory loss. Types of dementia include, but are not limited to, Alzheimer's Disease, Lewy Body Dementia, Vascular Dementia, and Chronic Brain Syndrome. " www.

Alzcombo. com" Although many of us have heard a lot about dementia, we really do not understand the disease process. Even though dementia is not curable, its effects can be slowed down, if caught in time. One may question what causes dementia, however, perhaps more importantly, we should consider complications associated with the disease process, treatment options, as well as available support for the individuals and their loved ones. Let us first begin with a definition of dementia: a progressive decline of mental functions such as language, attention, reasoning, memory, problem solving, and identifying people or objects. Dementia affects the person's daily functions. Dementia is more commonly seen in older people but is not considered a normal part of aging.

Dementia usually occurs in the second half of life, often around the age sixty five. There are several causes believed to lead to dementia. For unknown reasons, it can be caused by the degeneration of the cerebral cortex, the part of the brain which major functions include memory, actions, thoughts, and personality. When these brain cells die, cognitive changes can begin to appear. Other causes of dementia can also be related to various diseases, infections, strokes, head injuries, or even drug and alcohol abuse. As dementia affects the brain, it does not stop the brain from working, but may alter or slow down the actions, thoughts, and personality of those suffering

<https://assignbuster.com/dementia-and-memory-loss-essay/>

from the disease. A person may revert to a childlike state as the disease progresses. How is dementia diagnosed? A person must go to the doctor.

Going to the doctor is the first step; the individual can not diagnosis themselves. During the appointment, he or she might recommend that the person make a follow-up visit with a geriatrician. A geriatrician is a doctor who specializes in treating the aging.

Part of the visit with the geriatric physician may include a medical work up. The work up may include, but is not limited to, a thorough medical history, review of medications, physical examination, laboratory tests, neurological examination, and neuropsychological testing. After these things are completed, the doctor is able to make the diagnosis of dementia, by ruling out any other possible conditions.

In assessing the many factors that contribute to the diagnosis, it is also important to know the general state of health of the individual. Getting the appropriate diagnosis is very crucial for the patient, as this is very important in determining treatment. The goal for treatment is to slow down the progression of impairments associated with the disease process, and to control negative behavioral symptoms sometimes associated with dementia. Treatment may consist of medication (Namenda and Aricept are examples), psychotherapy, environmental modifications, and other therapies to help with activities of daily living.

These may include a combination of speech, occupational, and physical therapies. Keeping an individual engaged in daily activities like crafts, music,

and outdoor activities is believed to help with slowing down symptoms of the disease. Keeping them engaged and stimulated can be helpful, as well as simplifying daily routines and activities. Making tasks less complicated may decrease an individual's frustration, confusion, and prevent over-stimulation. Over-stimulation can lead to aggression and negative behaviors. Examples of simplifying tasks may include: setting the table using only one set of utensils and serving only one food at a time. Another example might be to limit clothing choices during dressing.

Knowing these things can help improve the individual's overall well being, and may help in delaying further progression of the disease. A diagnosis of dementia does not mean that life is over. It means that there will be challenges ahead, and thinking about those challenges now will better prepare your whole family for them and benefit all of you in the long run". Sited by Janssen Pharmaceutica, NV – Turnhoutseweg 30, 2340 Beerse, Turnhout RPR nr. 0403.

834. 160 Last updated on 19 May 2009 How serious is dementia? Dementia is very serious, because it affects the brain. Dementia can cause serious memory loss, behavioral problems, and personality changes. How does an individual with dementia think? The following is a scenario that might occur with an individual with dementia. You have a sixty eight year old woman, who loves to cook.

So you ask yourself " does she really know how to cook? " and if so, does she even remember how? Depending on the severity or progression of the disease, more than likely she thinks she knows how, but really does not. The

woman begins cooking, and walks away from the stove. She then forgets all about the stove being on. She starts to see smoke and flames in her home, but instead of removing herself from danger, she sits down. In this case, the lady sees the house has burst into flames and smoke, but has no idea what to do. She also has no idea of how to get out of the house. This is not good! The lady has a serious case of memory loss. Thank goodness that someone was walking by and stopped and helped the lady get out of the house! So if it were not for the person walking by, the lady could have died, all because of having memory loss and her decreased ability to process information.

This scenario has a happy ending; unfortunately, this often is not the case. People with dementia (or other types of memory loss) often do not recognize when they should no longer do certain things. That is when others need to step in and help. We have to remember dementia can be very risky to a person in all kinds of ways.

After the onset of dementia, how does that affect the person's lifestyle?

Much of it depends on how advanced the disease has progressed. If a person has just been recently diagnosed, one way to help is to get organized. As the beginning stages of dementia can progress quickly, the individual can start with creating a journal, continuing normal activities until unable to do so, plan for the future, making regular scheduled doctors appointments, taking care of one's physical health, eat a healthy diet, and taking medications as prescribed. Another step the dementia person can take is to organize their belongings where they easy to find. Also, keep communication open with family and friends. Doing this in the early stages of dementia may help the

individual later, as the disease progresses. If a person has been diagnosed with dementia at a later stage, taking medications prescribed by the doctor can help delay further progression of the disease. As the disease progresses, individuals may become more forgetful, demonstrate decreased appetite and poor hygiene.

Activities of daily living may also decrease, as the individual is sleeping more and more. As previously mentioned, people with dementia can have behavioral issues. In the lifestyle of a demented person there are many steps to take depending on the progression of the disease. Finally, in many cases, individuals with dementia are placed in a nursing home setting. The reason is often because caretakers and loved ones have a hard time adapting to a person with dementia or some sort of memory loss. One reason people often have a hard time with someone who has memory loss is because of radical changes in personality and demeanor. They may appear to be a totally different person, at times. These people can become violent and/or childlike.

The person may exhibit a physical and mental decline very rapidly. After a person has been diagnosis with dementia, he or she, as well as family and loved ones, can attend support groups to help them cope with the disease. Several support groups are as listed below, such as those provided by the Mayo Clinic and the Elder Care Resource Center. These are some of the many support groups that are available.

Their web addresses are “ <http://www.mayoclinic.org/community-events-jax/support-groups.html>, <http://www.elder-care.com>.

eldercarerresourcecenter.com” At these organizations one can give a person the education and emotional support they need. Support groups are very helpful in coping with a disease like dementia. Support groups can give information on the responsibilities of the individual dealing with the disease. They will teach you how to deal with, communicate, and care for a person with dementia or someone who has memory loss. Also, these support groups will offer the individual areas of placement for the individual’s with dementia or memory loss.

When a person has been diagnosed with dementia or some kind of memory loss, it affects not only the individual, but the family as well. In having dementia, it can be a very serious disease resulting into death. As many aging people deal with this disease today, their loved one has a hard time adapting to how the progression works. Also, most are in denial, because they cannot accept the fact that their loved one has been diagnosed with this disease. Even though, the disease is not curable, it can still be treated with medication. If caught in time, it will help slow down the disease process. So if someone you know or a loved one has been diagnosed with a memory loss, such as dementia; be prepared for all changes and seek professional support. Remember there are many support groups available for a person with memory loss like dementia; to help cope with and understand the disease process.

Do not set yourself back by being in denial; get help soon and fast because the end result is death. Be prepared! Do not let it pass you by without understanding it! It does help to know what is going on with one who has

been diagnosed with it. You do not want to hate yourself for not knowing because it is too late. So if you are dealing with a loved one that has been recently or in the past been diagnosed with dementia, how are you going to cope with the disease? Online-References • <http://www.wrongdiagnosis.com/d/dementia/causes.htm> • <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000739.htm#Causes,%20incidence,%20and%20ri>.

.. • <http://www.webmd.com/alzheimers/guide/alzheimers> • www.AlzCombo.com • http://www.eldercareresourcecenter.com/Support_Groups.htm • <http://gerontologist.gerontologyjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/35/5/691> • <http://www.mayoclinic.org/community-events-jax/support-groups>.

.. • <http://www.webmd.com/alzheimers/guide/alzheimers> • www.AlzCombo.com • http://www.eldercareresourcecenter.com/Support_Groups.htm • <http://gerontologist.gerontologyjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/35/5/691> • <http://www.mayoclinic.org/community-events-jax/support-groups>.

tml Axia College Material Appendix G Peer Review Checklist* | What is the main point of this essay? | To explain how Dementia works and how to slow down the process of Dementia. | | | | | | | | | | What is the greatest strength of this essay? | The essay gives a very good explanation on Dementia. It has a lot of information on | | | the subject. | | | | | | | | | | Does the introduction grab your interest and| Yes, It makes me want to understand Dementia more and see how it can be slowed down. | make you want to read on? Explain your | | | answer.

| | | | | | What material does not seem to fit the main | I feel all the information fit the main point. | point of the essay or does not seem to be | | | appropriate for the audience? | | | | | | Where should the author add more details or | | | examples? Explain your answer. What effects can it have on

the individual's brain? More types of affects instead of | | | just the one example of what happens after the dementia sets in. Example: Does it | | | cause the brain to swell or stop working in certain areas. | | | | | | | | Where is the writing unclear or vague? In the 6th paragraph where they discuss support groups maybe try naming one or two. | | | | | | | | | | What is your favorite part of this piece of | The introduction it tells what is going to be discussed and catches my attention.

| | writing? | | | | | | | | What other comments can you provide for the | I will say this essay is very interesting with only one spelling error and one subject| | author? | verb agreement issue. I believe you have the right idea maybe add a little more | | | information in paragraph 6. | | | | | | | |

*Adapted from Reinking, J. A. , Hart, A. W.

, & Von der Osten, R. (2003). *Strategies for successful writing: A rhetoric, research guide, reader, and handbook* (6th ed.

). Boston: Prentice-Hall/Pearson Custom Publishing.