

Still disease is
increasing age. the
6th leading

Countries, United States



Still Alice is a novel about a Harvard psychology professor, named Alice Howland, who began to experience early symptoms of Alzheimer's disease after her 50th birthday. The novel focuses on the progress of the disease and how it began to affect her everyday life. It began when she had difficulties remembering information for a presentation she was presenting. Another time she was jogging in her neighborhood and was not able to find her way back home.

She also had a hard time remembering course material that she was supposed to teach at the University that she had just prepared right before class. Things progressively got more and more difficult for Alice making her believe it was a symptom of menopause. Eventually, Alice began to feel that the loss of her memory was taking control of her life. Alice was going through a very hard time accepting the fact that she might be experiencing a form of memory loss. At first, she chose not to tell her husband about what was going on and wanted to handle it on her own. Eventually, she shared what was happening with her husband and they both agreed that she should see a neurologist for genetic testing. The testing showed that she was indeed experiencing early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

It was found that she had a genetic link to the disease and her children have a chance of forming the disease when they were older. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia ("Alzheimer's Disease," n. d.). 70% of dementia cases are Alzheimer's disease. Adults with this disease have a hard time finishing daily routines, solving problems, and orienting to time and place (Smallfield, 2017). As seen in Still Alice, symptoms usually advance slowly.

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The risk factor for this disease is increasing age. The 6th leading cause of death in the United States is Alzheimer's disease ("Alzheimer's Disease," n.d.

). Those with Alzheimer's disease have a loss of brain cells and neurons. No cure has been found and it is completely irreversible (Jenson & Padilla, 2017). Researchers have found different ways to treat it, some in which consists of medications and non medications. The cause of this disease is unknown but it is identified to have a genetic tie and can be found with genetic testing.

Many people believe Alzheimer's disease is a gradual death of the mind. There are three stages of Alzheimer's disease. These stages include early, moderate, and advanced. In the early stage, the ability to learn new information is affected. Vocabulary decreases and the person has a hard time finding words to use like what happened to Alice in the presentation. The fluency of conversations is affected. This stage is the stage Alice was experiencing in the novel at first.

Her vocabulary was decreased and she had a hard time finding a choice of words to use. Those in the early stage are normally still independent. The second stage of Alzheimer's disease is moderate. Everyday activities become much harder to complete. Vocabulary recall becomes more difficult. The ability to read and write are lost. This is also the stage where Alice forgot who her daughter, Lydia, was.

In this stage, they may have problems recognizing the people they were closest to. They are also known to become aggressive. The final stage in

Alzheimer's disease is the advanced stage. In this stage, the person is completely dependent. Words are minimal and sentences are rarely formed.

The person still appears to be aggressive but more exhausted. Alzheimer's disease is usually not the actual cause of death but instead an infection the person develops. One of the early common symptoms of Alzheimer's disease is the trouble of learning new information. This happens because the part of the brain that affects learning is the first to be affected in the disease. This is most likely why short term memory loss begins. Cognitive impairment is one of the main symptoms Alice was experiencing. " Cognitive decline is one of the major neuropsychiatric features in Alzheimer's disease (Tang et al.

, 2017)." Disorientation is another common symptom. This ties into the novel where Alice lost her sense of direction after going jogging in a route she had been very familiar with. Semantic memory is also affected. Semantic memory is the general knowledge we learn throughout life. A common psychological symptom for Alzheimer's disease is depression. In the novel, Alice was depressed when she found out her children will have a chance of having Alzheimer's as well.

The diagnosis is based on the genes and family history of the person. It can also be diagnosed based on the neuropsychological features seen in the brain. This can be seen through an MRI. In an MRI, they can usually see the progression of the disease and how the features of the brain change. In this assignment, I learned many of the symptoms those with Alzheimer's disease experience.

Alice had many of the typical symptoms that people experience. I believe learning about this disease is very important as a Speech-Language Pathologist. If I work the elder population, I can possibly have clients that suffer from Alzheimer's disease.