

# EARLY SYMPTOMATIC ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND THE NEED FOR TIMELY DETECTION AND DIAGNOSIS.



Alzheimer's disease may progress slowly over 10-20 years.<sup>1,2</sup> During this time, people living with Alzheimer's disease experience a continuum of symptoms, ranging from non-symptomatic preclinical Alzheimer's disease to severe dementia.<sup>3</sup> As an individual's disease and symptoms progress, Alzheimer's disease increasingly impacts their daily life, routine, and independence.<sup>1</sup>

Collectively, people with mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia, when due to Alzheimer's disease, can be described as individuals with early symptomatic Alzheimer's disease.



## Early symptoms of Alzheimer's disease could appear as:<sup>4</sup>

- worsening memory loss
- difficulty completing familiar tasks
- confusion with time or place
- new problems with words in speaking or writing
- misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps

## SPOTLIGHT

### Diagnosing Alzheimer's Disease

Upon concerns about subtle changes in memory or thinking abilities, seeking a clinical assessment from a primary care physician is an important first step. The results can help the doctor and patient decide whether additional assessments, lab monitoring, or specialist referral is appropriate.<sup>2</sup>

Scientific advancements in **biomarker-driven Alzheimer's disease diagnostics**, such as amyloid positron emission tomography (PET) imaging of the brain, are being combined with other clinical assessments to facilitate timelier confirmatory diagnoses.<sup>5</sup>

**Amyloid PET scans, cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) tests, and blood-based tests** detect biomarkers such as amyloid.<sup>8</sup> While amyloid naturally occurs, in some individuals amyloid can build up into plaques. This buildup of amyloid plaques may be associated with memory or thinking problems.<sup>2</sup>

Facilitating timely, affordable access to necessary clinical assessments and diagnostics is essential for improving the timelines of Alzheimer's disease detection and diagnosis.<sup>2,8</sup>



**A biomarker is a biological sign that may indicate the presence of a disease in the body.<sup>6</sup>**

## The Need for Timely Detection and Diagnosis

Concerns about cognitive health and memory or thinking issues can be intimidating to confront, but early symptomatic Alzheimer's disease should not be dismissed as normal aging.<sup>8</sup> Timely detection and accurate diagnosis are essential.

Timely diagnosis can help identify or eliminate Alzheimer's disease as the cause of a person's memory and thinking issues.<sup>8</sup>

Ultimately, receiving an Alzheimer's disease diagnosis *earlier in the disease progression* affords patients, loved ones, and providers more time to make personal and medical decisions.<sup>2,8</sup>



## Intervention can take many forms:<sup>9</sup>

- discussing cognitive screening with a physician
- requesting a referral to a specialist
- pursuing a diagnosis

PP-DN-US-0144 01/2023 ©Lilly USA, LLC 2023. All rights reserved.

### References:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Alzheimer's Disease. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/dotw/alzheimers/index.html#:~:text=Alzheimer%27s%20disease%20is%20the%20most,of%20death%20for%20all%20adults>. Accessed November 9, 2022.
- Porsteinsson AP, Isaacson RS, Knox S, et al. Diagnosis of early Alzheimer's disease: clinical practice in 2021. *J Prev Alzheimers Dis.* 2021;8:371-386.
- Aisen, P.S., Cummings, J., Jack, C.R. et al. On the path to 2025: understanding the Alzheimer's disease continuum. *Alz Res Therapy* 9, 60 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13195-017-0283-5>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/healthybrain/ten-warning-signs.html>. Accessed November 23, 2022.
- Ausó E, Gómez-Vicente V, Esquiva G. Biomarkers for Alzheimer's Disease Early Diagnosis. *J Pers Med.* 2020 Sep 4;10(3):114. doi: 10.3390/jpm10030114. PMID: 32899797; PMCID: PMC7563965.
- National Cancer Institute Dictionary. Biomarker. Available at: <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/biomarker>. Accessed December 2, 2022.
- Counts SE, Ikonomic MD, Mercado N, Vega IE, Mufson EJ. Biomarkers for the Early Detection and Progression of Alzheimer's Disease. *Neurotherapeutics.* 2017;14(1):35-53. doi: 10.1007/s13311-016-0481-z. PMID: 27738903; PMCID: PMC5233625.
- Galvin JE, Aisen P, Langbaum JB, et al. Early stages of Alzheimer's disease: evolving the care team for optimal patient management. *Front Neurol.* 2021;11:592302.
- InformedHealth.org [Internet]. Cologne, Germany: Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care (IQWiG); 2006-. Non-drug interventions for Alzheimer's disease. 2013 Jul 3 [Updated 2017 Jun 29]. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK279355/>