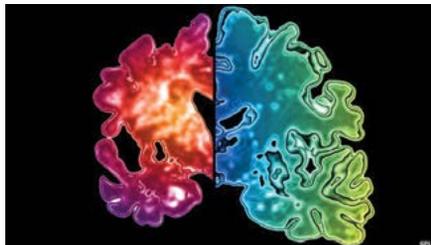


Your Loved One Has Dementia?

By Jessica Derkis



While there are many differences in causes, diagnoses, prognosis and treatment, there are a few things that may be helpful for almost everyone, no matter the disease.

Keeping a self-imposed but more regimented schedule may be helpful.

Let family and friends know of your whereabouts, thoughts and concerns you may have and just keep talking to friends, family and neighbors.

Working to release “happy” hormones such as dopamine, endorphins, oxytocin and serotonin is vital, especially in the later stages. Enjoying a favorite activity, creating vibrant artwork, singing, dancing as well as touch, music, and movement therapies can release these chemicals.

There are now more than 5 million people in the U.S affected by some form of dementia. And a diagnosis can not only help you lead a longer, happier life, it can also help find a cure. If you have concerns, see a trained physician and/or a neurologist to learn more.

Did you know that there are nearly 100 types of dementia? The top 10 include:

- Alzheimer’s
- Lewy Body
- Frontal Temporal
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Vascular
- Parkinson’s Related Dementia
- Creutzfeldt-Jacob Dementia
- Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus
- Huntington’s Disease
- Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome
- Mild Cognitive Impairment (that may or may not progress to full dementia)

And this is not to mention the dozens of treatable conditions such as infection and vitamin deficiency that can mimic dementia.



In early stages, it may be helpful to take a memory class and refresh often. In a world where multi-tasking seemingly rules, you may also find that keeping responsibilities as simple as possible to be beneficial.

Writing, writing and more writing may also help. Something as simple as creating lists and checking things off or journaling may provide clues to you and your family including insights into your personal thoughts and feelings but also your business dealings.

Mid-stage dementias frequently find people disengaging because of the confusion and embarrassment of forgetting. Family often wonders how to help and when to make decisions.

Jessica fell in love with serving seniors as a candy striper at the age of 10 and has made it her life's mission to encourage environments and attitudes that will foster happy, healthy seniors who are served with decency, dignity, respect and kindness. She has been opening, marketing and managing communities and teams with that mission in mind for the last 15 years. She recently moved to the San Francisco Bay Area to open Kensington Place of Redwood City—an innovative, new Assisted Living community specializing in serving those with Alzheimer's and other dementias. 650.363.9200 www.KensingtonPlaceRedwoodCity.com