



AGING TODAY World's Alzheimer's Day



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By Bob Roth, Managing Partner of Cypress HomeCare Solutions

Every September, people come together from all around the world to raise awareness and to challenge the stigma that is associated with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. This past month marked the 10th year of this global awareness campaign. September is World Alzheimer's Awareness month and just a little more than a week ago on September 21 is World Alzheimer's Day.

Why do we have a day and a month designated to Alzheimer's? Why wouldn't we - It's the fifth leading cause of death of people over 65 years old. 1 in 3 seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another Dementia. It kills more than Breast Cancer and Prostate Cancer combined. Between 2000 and 2019, deaths from heart disease have decreased 7.3% while deaths from Alzheimer's have increased 145%.

Why is this happening? Why are more and more people coming down with this progressive neurologic disorder that causes the brain to shrink (atrophy) and brain cells to die? Scientist have not discovered why but we do know that we need to bring awareness to this now more than ever as it is beginning to spiral out of control.

The toll of Alzheimer's disease has reached epidemic proportions. One in nine (11.3%) Americans over age 65 is living with Alzheimer's at a cost of \$355 billion annually. The percentage of people with Alzheimer's dementia increases with age: 5.3% of people age 65 to 74, 13.8% of people age 75 to 84, and 34.6% of people age 85 and older have Alzheimer's dementia.

Nearly two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's are women. Someone receives a devastating Alzheimer's diagnosis every 65 seconds and every 3 seconds someone in the world develops dementia. Currently Alzheimer's is the 5th leading cause of death of people 65 and older and by 2050, nearly as many as 16 million people in the U.S. will be battling the disease, and the cost to care for them will exceed \$1.1 trillion.

Shining a light on this is an imperative for our Country but also for the World. This is worldwide, and a humanity challenge that we need to figure out and problem solve soon, or this disease will crush our very existence.

On June 7 this year, the FDA approved a new drug to treat patients with Alzheimer's disease. Manufactured by Biogen, Aduhelm (aducanumab) is the first novel therapy approved for Alzheimer's disease since 2003. Perhaps more significantly, Aduhelm is the first treatment directed at the underlying pathophysiology of Alzheimer's disease, the presence of amyloid beta plaques in the brain. While this drug therapy is somewhat controversial, it is a breakthrough for those in the area of dementia/Alzheimer's research. It's been nearly 20 years, and there are more drugs that are in the clinical trials pipeline presently, researchers are hopeful that there will be breakthroughs with these trials that will lead to more drug therapy treatments being approved in the future.

Planning for the future is paramount, and as a community we will need to pull together if we are going to ever eradicate our world of this horrible disease. What are some of the signs we should be looking for that may be an indication that a loved one may have Alzheimer's.

Here are ten early symptoms that you should never ignore:

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- Challenges in planning or solving problems
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusing time and place
- New problems with words in speaking and writing

- Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
- Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
- Decreased or poor judgment.
- Withdrawal from work and social activities
- Changes in mood and personality

Now is the time to act, when people who are united by a cause that is for the greater good of mankind great things can happen. Come and join me in this movement to end Alzheimer's. Join us and sign up for the Memory Walk to end Alzheimer's Disease. On November 6, the city of Phoenix will be holding their Memory Walk, to learn more go to the Desert Southwest Chapter at <https://www.alz.org/dsw>. In addition, if you would like to learn about the Alzheimer's Prevention, and a registry that was formed to get the word out there, go to www.endalz.org and help make a difference in the lives of our future generations.

It may take a village to raise a child; but for us to find a cure, it will take every bit of our village and many others too. At Cypress HomeCare Solutions we are committed to serve those afflicted with dementia and Alzheimer's.

This column was published in [Loving Life After 50](#) and [Jewish News](#) as Cypress' monthly contribution.