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Rushing Family Practice

NOVEMBER IS ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS MONTH

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Caregivers, we see you.

November is Alzheimer's Awareness Month. Facing an Alzheimer's diagnosis can be lonely, but you don't have to do it alone. Visit our website at www.huntregional.org/supportgroups to see meeting times.




Let us remember for those who can not.

HERALD BANNER PUBLICATIONS

Alzheimer's and Dementia

Alzheimer's disease is one of the more prominent forms of dementia. But many other types of dementia also cause physical and cognitive alterations.

DEMENTIA IS NOT A SINGLE DISEASE; IT'S AN OVERALL TERM — LIKE HEART DISEASE — THAT COVERS A WIDE RANGE OF SPECIFIC MEDICAL CONDITIONS, INCLUDING ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE.

The Alzheimers Associations explains that disorders grouped under the general term "dementia" are caused by abnormal brain changes. The changes trigger a decline in cognitive abilities severe enough to impair daily life and independent function, as well as affect behavior, feelings and relationships.

Memory loss alone does not lead to a dementia diagnosis. It presents with several symptoms, and, according to the Mayo Clinic, those include:

- Trouble communicating or finding words.
- Difficulty completing complex tasks.
- Challenges with planning and organization.
- Episodes of confusion and disorientation.
- Memory loss, which is often noticed by a third party.
- Personality changes that can include agitation, anxiety, inappropriate behavior and even hallucinations.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE accounts for 60 to 80 percent of dementia cases, according to the Alzheimers Association. The second most common is **VASCULAR DEMENTIA**, caused by damage to vessels that supply blood to the brain. This damage can be the result of stroke, smoking or other blood vessel conditions. Brain imaging can often detect blood vessel problems implicated in vascular dementia.

DEMENTIA WITH LEWY BODIES, or DLB, involves not only memory loss and cognitive problems, but also includes initial or early symptoms such as sleep disturbances, well-formed visual hallucinations, slowness, gait imbalance or other Parkinsonian movement features, which can lead to misdiagnosis.

If physicians suspect dementia was caused by various factors, a person may be diagnosed with **MIXED DEMENTIA**.

Unfortunately, there are no cures for progressive dementias that are linked to plaque tangles in the brain and changes in the way the brain processes the protein alpha-synuclein.

Patience and various medications may be needed to help those with dementia live fuller lives. Cholinesterase inhibitors are mainstays in dementia treatment. These medications prevent the breakdown of acetylcholine, a chemical messenger important for learning and memory. Acetylcholine supports communication among nerve cells by keeping acetylcholine levels high. Physical therapy and cognitive therapy may be used in conjunction with medication to assist those with various dementias.

REMEMBER FOR ME Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group

based in Hunt County, provides support and education for care-givers while raising awareness of Alzheimer's Disease.

MEETING DAY AND TIME:

Second Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

MEETING LOCATION:

Hunt Regional Medical Center's sixth floor boardroom.

For information: 903- 455-4335

www.facebook.com/rememberformealz/

Go Purple FOR NATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

