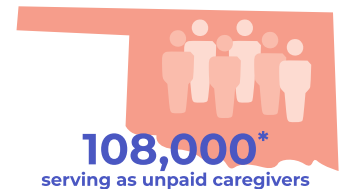
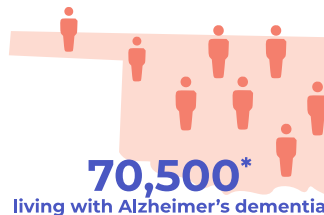


# UNDERSTANDING ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA



Based on 2023 Alzheimer's Association data, an estimated 70,500 Oklahomans are living with Alzheimer's dementia. 108,000 Oklahomans are estimated to be serving as unpaid caregivers for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia.



\*estimated

## What is Alzheimer's and Dementia?

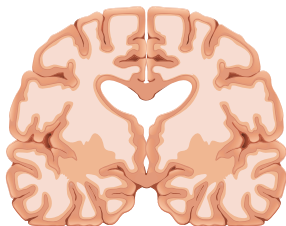
The terms "dementia" and "Alzheimer's" are often used as though they mean the same thing. They are related, but there are important differences between the two.

### Dementia

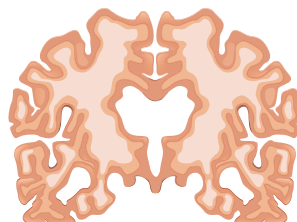
Dementia is a broad ("umbrella") term for an individual's changes in memory, thinking or reasoning. There are many possible causes of dementia, including Alzheimer's. Visit [alz.org/dementia](http://alz.org/dementia) to learn about other types of dementia.

### Alzheimer's

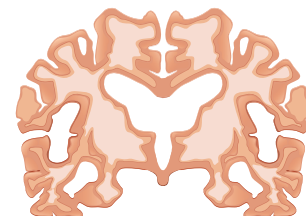
Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia. It makes up 60%-80% of all dementia cases. Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging — it's a progressive brain disease, meaning it gets worse over time. It is marked by key changes and impacts memory, thinking and behavior.



Healthy Brain



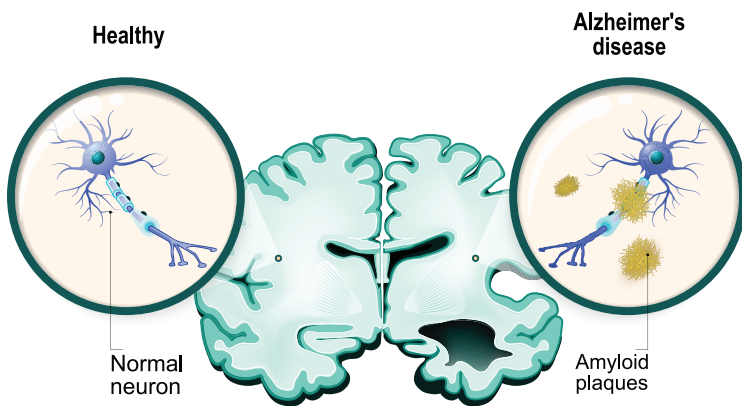
Mild Alzheimer's



Severe Alzheimer's

# What goes wrong in the brain?

The brain has three main parts: the cerebrum, cerebellum and brain stem. Each has a job to do to make the body work properly. There are about 100 billion nerve cells called neurons throughout the brain that send messages in order to make memories, feelings and thoughts.



**Alzheimer's disease causes nerve cells to die.** This causes the brain to lose tissue and the loss of function and communication between cells. These changes can cause the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease.

Scientists know nerve cell failure is part of Alzheimer's disease, but they don't yet know why this happens. However, they have identified certain risk factors that increase the likelihood of developing Alzheimer's.

## Risk Factors

### Age

After age 65, a person's risk of developing the disease doubles every five years. 32% of people age 85 or older have Alzheimer's.

### Family History

People who have a parent, brother or sister with Alzheimer's are more likely to develop it than those who do not. The risk increases if more than one family member has the disease.

### Genetics

Two types of genes influence whether a person develops a disease: risk genes and deterministic genes. Risk genes increase the chance of developing a disease. Deterministic genes cause a disease. This means anyone who inherits a deterministic gene will develop a disorder. Rare deterministic genes cause Alzheimer's in a few hundred extended families worldwide.

### Race and Gender

Older Hispanics are about one-and-a-half times as likely as older whites to have Alzheimer's and other dementias, while older African Americans are about twice as likely. Also, women live longer than men, making them more likely to develop Alzheimer's.

Age, family history and genetics are all risk factors we can't change. However, research is starting to show clues about other risk factors that we may be able to influence. Learn 10 Ways to love your brain to help prevent cognitive decline by visiting the website.