

NC Department of Health and Human Services NC Nurse Aide I Curriculum

# Module T Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease

July 2024

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#### **Objective**

- Define dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and delirium
- 2. Identify common types of dementia
- 3. Describe the 3 stages of Alzheimer's disease
- 4. Describe the nurse aide's role in the care of residents diagnosed with dementia

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#### **Dementia**

A progressive condition, more commonly marked by the development of multiple cognitive deficits:

- Memory impairment
- Aphasia
- Inability to plan and initiate complex behavior



Common Types of Dementia	
Alzheimer's disease	
Vascular dementia	
Dementia with Lewy body	
Mixed dementia	
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#### **Alzheimer's Disease**

- Progressive disease
- Rate of progression varies
- On average after diagnosis live three to eleven years
- Degree of impairment at diagnosis can affect life expectancy Progression of Alzheimer's Disease







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# Early-Stage Alzheimer's (Mild) Signs and Symptoms

- Difficulty with remembering names and using words
- Having difficulty performing tasks at home or work
- Not recalling read material
- Losing or misplacing items
- Difficulty with organizing or planning

### Middle-Stage Alzheimer's (Moderate) Signs and Symptoms

- Forgetting current or past events
- Displaying behaviors of withdrawal and changes in mood
- Unable to recall address or telephone number
- · Not oriented to person, place or time

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### Middle-Stage Alzheimer's (Moderate) Signs and Symptoms

- Requires assistance with choosing appropriate clothing for the occasion or weather
- · Occasional incontinence
- · Sleep pattern disturbances
- Wandering
- Changes in behavior and personality

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# Late-Stage Alzheimer's (Severe) Signs and Symptoms

- 24-hour care required for personal needs
- Difficulty with sitting, walking, and swallowing
- Communication challenges
- At risk for infections, especially pneumonia.

#### **Delirium**

State of severe and sudden confusion

- Triggered by acute illness or change in physical condition
- Can be life threatening if not recognized and treated
- Reversible



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#### **Dementia or Delirium?**





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#### **Respect and Dementia**



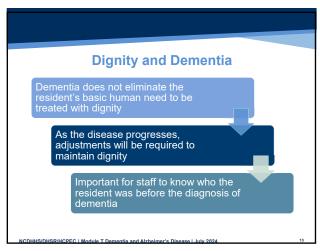
Dementia does not eliminate the basic need to be respected by others



Person-centered care maintains and supports the person regardless of level of dementia

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## Communicating with Residents with Dementia

Dementia gradually diminishes a person's ability to communicate and becomes more difficult during the progression of the disease

- Requires patience, understanding, and good listening skills
- May exhibit difficulty making wishes known and understanding spoken words

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### Communication Strategies and Tips in Dementia Care

- The use of the following can redirect the resident and manage escalating behavior positively and proactively:
  - —Positive tone
  - -Medium volume
  - —Simple sentences
  - -Rapport-building conversations
  - —Open body language
  - —Avoidance of distractions
  - —Creative problem solving
- A combination of the above techniques will be most effective in managing escalating behavior

#### **Dementia - Behavioral Issues**

- The normal brain controls responses
- · All behavior is a response to a need
- Resident's behavior should be recorded based on observations
- Residents with dementia typically have lost much of their ability to control responses
- Common behaviors include sundowning, wandering, repetition, aggression and anger

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#### **Nurse Aide Stress and Burnout**

- Providing care on daily basis for residents with dementia can be stressful
- Residents with dementia may be more prone than others to becoming victims of abuse or neglect
- Nurse aides must take the necessary steps to ensure they do not react in an unprofessional manner

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The End	
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