

# Penn Memory Center

University of Pennsylvania

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Penn Medicine

Penn Memory Center  
[www.pennadc.org](http://www.pennadc.org)

# Overview

- What is the Penn Memory Center?
- What is the difference between dementia and Alzheimer's disease?
- What you can do to delay cognitive decline?
- Why is research important?
- What is the NACC study?

*“I want to do whatever I can,* so that no other family will have to go through what we are going through” -  
*Vivian Wheeler,* PMC Research Participant



**Karen Wheeler**

**Vivian Wheeler**

# Penn Memory Center

- National Institute on Aging designated Alzheimer's disease center
- One of 30 such sites in the nation and *the only* site in our tri-state region
- Interdisciplinary center (neurologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, geriatricians, social workers, and research coordinators)

# What is Dementia?

- Generic term that describes a number of different diseases
- Causes: Alzheimer's disease, Vascular dementia, Dementia with Lewey Bodies, Parkinson's disease, and Frontotemporal dementia
- *Not part of normal aging*

Dementia is an "Umbrella term", referring to many different types of dementia

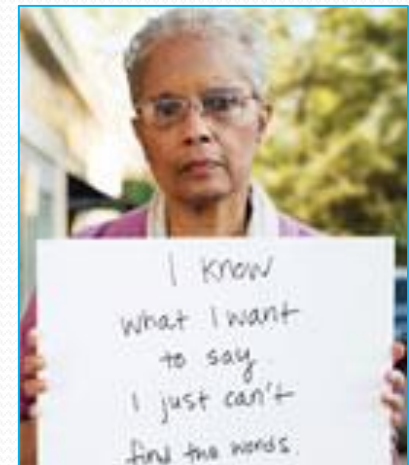


The most common type of dementia is **Alzheimers Disease** (illustrated as the handle of this umbrella)

Each of the lesser common types of dementia, such as **Vascular, Lewy Body, Frontotemporal**, etc, is illustrated as a separate section of the umbrella

# Ten Warning Signs of Dementia

1. Memory loss that affects daily life
2. Difficulty in planning or solving problems
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home or work
4. Confusion with time and place
5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
6. New problems with words in speaking or writing
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
8. Decreased or poor judgment
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities
10. Changes in mood or personality



# Alzheimer's Disease

- Irreversible, progressive brain disease that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills
- Advances by stages, from early to mild forgetfulness to severe dementia
- Risk Factors: Age, family history, and genetics
- *No known cause – No known cure*

# Why does it matter?

- More than **5 million Americans** are living with Alzheimer's disease
- Alzheimer's disease is the **sixth-leading cause of death** in the United States—the only disease that cannot be prevented, cured or even slowed
- **1 in 3** seniors die with Alzheimer's or another dementia
- More than **15 million Americans provide unpaid care** for persons with Alzheimer's and other dementias



# African Americans and Alzheimer's disease

- Older African Americans are approximately *two times more likely* than older Caucasian Americans to have Alzheimer's and other dementias
- African Americans have a higher risk of diabetes, higher blood pressure, and higher rates of cholesterol and other cardiovascular complications





What can *you* do to delay cognitive decline in older age?

# Healthy Aging

If it's good for your heart, it's good for your brain!



# Why is research important?

*Dorothy Ganie, PMC Research  
Participant, Brain Donor*



*“When it comes to  
solving the  
problems of these  
diseases, **we’re all in  
it together**”*

*-Jim Edwards, Dorothy’s  
brother*



*Jim Edwards saw the problem,  
what can you do?*

# What is NACC?

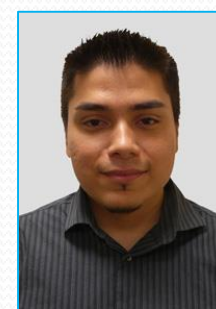
- Refers to the **National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center**
- The major brain-aging research program sponsored by the National Institute on Aging (NIA)
- The largest and most comprehensive research effort in the U.S aimed at better understanding Alzheimer's disease, mild cognitive impairment, and life-long brain health
- Penn Memory Center has been contributing data since 1999
- NACC data is used by scientists across the nation and the world

# Who can participate?

- Individuals who are **60 years of age or older**
- Individuals with:
  - **Normal** memory and thinking
  - **MCI** – mild cognitive impairment
  - **Mild to moderate** Alzheimer's disease
- Individual who has a **study partner**
  - Spouse, child, or friend who knows the participant well
- Willing to take part in **one or more types of imaging studies** (MRI or PET scans)

# What happens during the visit?

- Participants come in **once a year**
- It runs approximately **two hours** and the visit includes:
  - Cognitive testing, blood samples, basic neurological exam, interviews about patient's functioning, and input from study partner
- **Results will be shared** with patients and families during the visit and will also be passed on to their primary care physicians





# Benefits to *you*...

- There is **NO CHARGE** to the participant or insurance provider
- **FREE yearly visit** to monitor your brain health

- **FREE parking** provided



- **HELPS researchers** find a cure for Alzheimer's disease

# Thank *You* Breakfast



*Thank you for your contribution to Penn's  
Alzheimer's disease research!*



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To participate in the NACC research please call **Ivy Mesa** at 215-614-1829

