

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska

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Another Step Toward an Alzheimer's Vaccine

Source: Proceedings of the
National Academy of Sciences
(PNAS)

A team of researchers from
Université Laval, CHU de
Québec, and pharmaceutical
firm GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)
have discovered a way to
stimulate the brain's natural
defense mechanisms in people
with Alzheimer's disease. The
details that are presented
today in an early online edition
of the Proceedings of the
National Academy of Sciences
(PNAS), open the door to the
development of a treatment
for Alzheimer's disease and a
vaccine to prevent the illness.

One of the main characteristics
of Alzheimer's disease is the
production in the brain of
a toxic molecule known as
amyloid beta. Microglial cells,
the nervous system's defenders,
are unable to eliminate this
substance, which forms deposits
called senile plaques.

The team led by Dr. Serge
Rivest, professor at Université
Laval's Faculty of Medicine
and researcher at the CHU
de Québec research center,
identified a molecule that
stimulates the activity of the
brain's immune cells. The
molecule, known as MPL
(monophosphoryl lipid A),
has been used extensively as
a vaccine adjuvant by GSK for

many years, and its safety is well
established.

In mice with Alzheimer's
symptoms, weekly injections
of MPL over a twelve-week
period eliminated up to 80% of
senile plaques. In addition, tests
measuring the mice's ability
to learn new tasks showed
significant improvement in
cognitive function over the same
period.

The researchers see two
potential uses for MPL. It
could be administered by
intramuscular injection to
people with Alzheimer's disease
to slow the progression of
the illness. It could also be
incorporated into a vaccine
designed to stimulate the
production of antibodies against
amyloid beta. "The vaccine could
be given to people who already
have the disease to stimulate
their natural immunity," said
Serge Rivest. "It could also be
administered as a preventive
measure to people with risk
factors for Alzheimer's disease."

"When our team started working
on Alzheimer's disease a decade
ago, our goal was to develop
better treatment for Alzheimer's
patients," explained Professor
Rivest. "With the discovery
announced today, I think we're
close to our objective."

It should be noted that the
authors made the following
statement in the conclusion of
their publication (quote from
the PNAS publication):

"Although the safety of the
MPL treatment regimen used
here has not been confirmed
in humans, this compound has
been administered to hundreds
of thousands of humans as an
adjuvant in different vaccines
and is currently used as a
component of a marketed
human vaccine (Cervarix)."

*Taken from the BrightFocus Foundation
(the new name for the American Health
Assistance Foundation)*



Join us as we raise money to
support those impacted by
Alzheimer's disease and related
dementia. Through compassion
and hope we aspire to the day
when the cure for Alzheimer's is
found.

Start by logging onto our website
www.AlzAlaska.org.

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Fax 561-3315

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565 University Ave., Suite 2
Fairbanks, AK 99709
Phone (907) 452-2277
Fax 457-3376

Juneau

3225 Hospital Dr., Suite 100
Juneau, AK, 99801
Phone (907) 586-6044
Fax 586-6084

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Suite 110
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Toll Free within Alaska
(800) 478-1080

www.AlzAlaska.org

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Letter from the Executive Director

New Education Programs Offered by Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska



Many of you are familiar with the programs offered here at Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska because you've used them and have seen them in action. Maybe you took a course to learn how best to approach and relate to your loved one with Alzheimer's disease, or arranged to have a care coordinator come in to help you understand what resources may be available to you? Perhaps an in-home worker assisted in caregiving while you received respite? While our programs will continue as they have—spanning in-home to in-class, consults to coordination—there is a new and developing addition to what we offer.

For those caregivers who live in rural areas, we are offering more options via webinar or over the telephone. Call-in support groups offer a new option to connect without leaving home. The group communicates with each other and shares experiences, ideas and support but across a phone line, instead of a conference table. Additional classes are now offered in this way, and enable those who cannot reach an office-held class, to still benefit from our programs. These classes include Savvy Caregiver which helps a family caregiver learn new strategies and tactics for helping their loved one as well as a variety of useful topics: Honoring Communication, Adult Guardianship, Community Resources, Safety Tips and Dementia, Behaviors that Challenge Us and others. These classes are attended by calling into a toll-free conference line with an access code and then utilizing materials via your computer or through shared materials sent to you once you've registered.

In a state as spread out as Alaska, coming together as a group is just as necessary but is logistically much more difficult and challenging to do. We will continue to increase our offerings of educational and supportive opportunities in this way. If you or a loved one, has a particular need, please contact us to see if we can offer assistance in an over-the-phone consult or suggest a group or class, near you.

Kind regards,

Executive Director

STORIES IN THE NEWS:

- *Misrepresentations Hamper Dementia Studies*
- *Lewy Body Dementia Often Confused With Alzheimer's - What is Alzheimer's Disease?*
- *Hearing Loss Accelerates Brain Function Decline in Older Adults*

In-Home Services

Why In-Home Services?

A quick knock at the door and a smile signals to this client that their helper has arrived. Moments later, with shovel and de-icer in hand, our in-home services worker begins one of the many typical chores enjoyed by those who are, at this point in their lives, unable to tackle the physical chores of living in Alaska or even, living alone.

Our in-home care isn't just for those with Alzheimer's and related disorders. We also assist frail elders, ages 60 and over, with a sliding fee scale which makes it affordable to all who need care.

In a society of increased business, one of the greatest joys our in-home service workers bring is their friendliness and companionship to some who otherwise feel left out. During the process of tidying up, preparing a meal, hair brushing, doing laundry or mopping floors, the visit that comes with the time these tasks can take, is, at times, considered more valuable than the tasks offered.

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska also provides respite services to family members who need a break from caregiving. During this time, the family caregiver can see their doctor to keep up on their own healthcare, take care of grocery shopping, get their hair done, or simply spend time with friends and family while not also acting as caregiver.



Back home, the elder may want to hear a chapter read from a favorite book, review photo albums, enjoy an art project or sit and visit with an interested and caring in-home worker. This respite time increases the longevity of the family caregivers ability to continue to provide care by giving them a chance for a break. It also increases the elder's exposure to additional people as debilitating illness often leads to isolation. Our goal is to offer continuity of workers in the home in order to maximize their effectiveness and relationships with clients.

Our in-home workers have specific dementia care training that make them best able to communicate and work with these elders because of techniques that they've learned. Additionally, they're screened for appropriate backgrounds and interest and aptitude for caregiving.

With the understanding that we must wait for research to be discovered to impact the progress of Alzheimer's and related disorders, we have maintained

our role for the past 30 years to ensure quality of life for all of those affected, until a cure is found.





Q & A

Q What are some Tips to help me be a better caregiver?

A. Caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease at home is a difficult task and can become overwhelming at times. Each day brings new challenges as the caregiver copes with changing levels of ability and new patterns of behavior. Research has shown that caregivers themselves often are at increased risk for depression and illness, especially if they do not receive adequate support from family, friends, and the community.

Do you run into difficult behaviors? Dressing, bathing, eating—basic activities of daily

living—often become difficult to manage for both the person with Alzheimer's and the caregiver. Having a plan for getting through the day can help caregivers cope. Many caregivers have found it helpful to use strategies for dealing with difficult behaviors and stressful situations. Through trial and error you will find that some of the following tips work, while others do not. Each person with Alzheimer's is unique and will respond differently, and each person changes over the course of the disease. Do the best you can, and remind yourself to take breaks.

Find a support group where you can share your feelings and concerns. Members of support groups often have helpful ideas or know of useful resources based on their own experiences. Online support groups make it possible for caregivers to receive support without having to leave

home. The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska offers telephone support groups as well as webinar styled classes.

Study your day to see if you can develop a routine that makes things go more smoothly. If there are times of day when the person with Alzheimer's is less confused or more cooperative, plan your routine to make the most of those moments. Keep in mind that the way the person functions may change from day to day, so try to be flexible and adapt

Do you have a question for our experts?

If so, write in to Aging@AlzAlaska.org.

All personal information is confidential.

Caregiver Corner

"Communication"

Trying to communicate with a person who has Alzheimer's disease can be a challenge. Both understanding and being understood may be difficult.

Choose simple words and short sentences and use a

gentle, calm tone of voice. Avoid talking to the person with Alzheimer's like a baby or talking about the person as if he or she weren't there. Minimize distractions and noise—such as the television or radio—to help the person focus on what you are saying. Make eye contact and call the person by name, making sure you have his or her attention before speaking. Allow enough time for a

response. Be careful not to interrupt. If the person with Alzheimer's is struggling to find a word or communicate a thought, gently try to provide the word he or she is looking for. Try to frame questions and instructions in a positive way. Be open to the person's concerns, even if he or she is hard to understand.



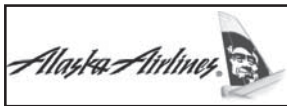
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Care Coordination

It can be difficult and overwhelming knowing what services are available to you and how to access them. We can enhance your independence, safety and comfort by assisting with service coordination. Our Care Coordinators are professionals who have extensive and current knowledge of community resources. They understand the eligibility requirements and payment options for home and community based services. They will assess your situation, and based on your decisions develop a plan to meet your needs, and monitor the situation to ensure services are responsive. Contact our Anchorage office for additional information at 561-3313 or visit us on the web at www.AlzAlaska.org.

Memorials & Tributes

Richard Brown

Cynthia Johnson

Virginia “Ginny” Clark

Ralph & Diane Miller

Leonard Ferucci

Pamela J Albrecht

M & Eleanor Bramante

Jackie Brunton

Helene J. Brust

Phyllis Buchanan

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“Making the Connection”

February’s 2013-winter workshop, “Making the Connection” featured Joanne Rader, RN, MN, PMHNP and Karen Stobbe, Entertainer and author. The workshop focused on the need for a shift in care for individuals with dementia and introduced the use of an “Experimental Model” that puts less emphasis on drugs and applies a person-centered approach to care. The participants learned how to implement the approach into every day practice.

“Excellent workshop – Thank you for all your hard work. You really make a difference.”

“Both speakers were great – awesome job! Wish all our staff could have been here and that this is offered again soon.”

A special thank you to our generous sponsor and training partner, Trust Training Cooperative. Be sure to visit their site at www.trusttrainingcoop.org for offered trainings around the State.

Mark your calendars for February 2014 for featured speaker, Teepa Snow – from “Accepting the Challenge”. Presented in Anchorage on February 3, Fairbanks, February 4 and Sitka on February 6.

Joan Adams, ADRAA’s Fairbanks
 Education Specialist
 Lisa Cauble, Director of the Trust
 Training Cooperative



The Speakers
 Karen Stobbe and
 JoAnn Rader

CLASSES around the state

For information on any of these classes or programs visit www.AlzAlaska.org or contact the office nearest you.

Anchorage

1750 Abbott Rd.
561-3313

- **Overview of Alzheimer's Disease**
10-11:30 AM or 5:30 - 7 PM
Monday, April 22
- **Caring Through Stages of Alzheimer's**
10-11:30 AM or 5:30 - 7 PM
Monday, May 13
- **Alzheimer's & Related Dementia: Knowing the Difference, Makes the Difference**
10-11:30 AM or 5:30-7 PM
Monday, May 20
- **Art Links** 11 - Noon, Fridays

Copper River Basin

822-5620

- **Being a Friend**
at PWSCC- 4 - 5 PM
Friday April 26
- **Mental Fitness**
Glennallen Senior Center
12:30-1:30 PM
Last Thursday of each month.
- **Knowing When to Brake: Driving Considerations**
Go To Meeting/Webinar
12-1:30 PM Tuesday, May 7
To Register Email Lisa
lwawrzonek@AlzAlaska.org

Savvy Caregiver (for families)

Webinar Format Kenny Lake
2:30-4:30 PM - Tuesdays
May 21 through June 25
Call Gay to register at
822-5620 or email
gwellman@AlzAlaska.org.

Mat-Su Valley

10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.
746-3413

- **Compassionate Touch**
2 - 3:30 PM or 6- 7:30 PM
Wednesday April 24
- **Traveling and Dementia**
1 - 2:30 PM or 6 - 7:30 PM
Tuesday, May 14
- **Children and Dementia: A Memorable Mix**
1 - 2:30 PM or 6 - 7:30 PM
Wednesday, June 19
- **Art Links** 1- 2 PM, Fridays

Fairbanks

565 University Dr., Suite 2
452-2277

- **When Does Forgetting Become a Disease?**
5:30 - 7 PM
Tuesday, May 14
- **Mind Matters - Memory Loss Support Group**
12:30 - 2 PM
April 25 - June 13
Call Joan for screening
at 452-2277 or email
jadams@AlzAlaska.org

Juneau

We moved to a new location
3225 Hospital Dr., Suite 100
586-6044

- **Is It Alzheimer's?**
Noon - 2 PM
Tuesday, May 21
- **Savvy Caregiver (for families)**
6 - 8 PM
Tuesday, April 16
six week class
Call Amber to register
at 586-6044 or email
asmith@AlzAlaska.org

Kodiak

- **Savvy Professional (training for professionals)**
Providence Island Medical Center
1915 E. Rezanof Dr.
8:30 AM - 5 PM
Wednesday, May 1
Registration Required: \$25
C.E. Credits Available
To register contact Marilyn at
mmckay@AlzAlaska.org
- **Savvy Caregiver (for families)**
Senior Citizens of Kodiak
9 AM - 5 PM
Friday, May 3
Registration Required: Free
Lunch provided
Call Marilyn to register
at 561-3313 or email
mmckay@AlzAlaska.org



SUPPORT GROUPS around the state

Anchorage				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 1750 Abbott Rd.	General Caregiver General Caregiver	2nd Thursday 4th Thursday	10 -11:30 AM 5:30-7 PM	Marilyn McKay 561-3313
Chester Park Cooperative 2020 Muldoon Rd.		1st Friday	10 -11:30 AM	
Eagle River				
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church 17545 N. Eagle River Loop Rd.	General Caregiver	2nd Thursday	6:30-8 PM	Marilyn McKay 561-3313/Linda Shepard 746-3413
Statewide Telephone Support Group				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska	General Caregiver	1st and 3rd Wednesday 2-3 PM Dial in 1-877-783-2009, Code 786108		Gay Wellman 882-5620 or (800) 478-1080 x6
Fairbanks				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 565 University Ave. Suite 2	General Caregiver	1st Tuesday	11:30 AM-1 PM	Joan Adams 452-2277
Homer				
Friendship Center	General Caregiver	2 Thursday's a month	2:30-3:30	Mary Jo 235-2295
Juneau				
KTOO 1st Floor Conference Room, 360 Egan Drive	General Caregiver	2nd Thursday Location will change, please call ahead.	12-1 PM	Joylynn 463-6177 or (866) 746-6177
Ketchikan				
Southeast Senior Services	Family Caregiver	Call for more information		Bernice 225-8080
Kodiak				
Kodiak Senior Center 302 Erskine Ave.	General Caregiver	4th Thursday	12:30-1:30 PM	Kathy Drabek 486-6181
Mat-Su Valley				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska Trinity Barn Plaza Mile 2.2 Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.	General Caregiver	2nd Wednesday	1-2:30 PM	Linda Shepard 746-3413
Seward				
Seward Senior Center	General Caregiver	4th Thursday	1-2 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
Sitka				
Brave Heart Volunteers	General Caregiver	2nd Wednesday	12-1 PM	747-4600
Soldotna				
Soldotna Senior Center	General Caregiver	2nd & Last Tuesday	1-3 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
Sterling				
Sterling Senior Center	General Caregiver	1st Tuesday	1-2 PM	262-6808

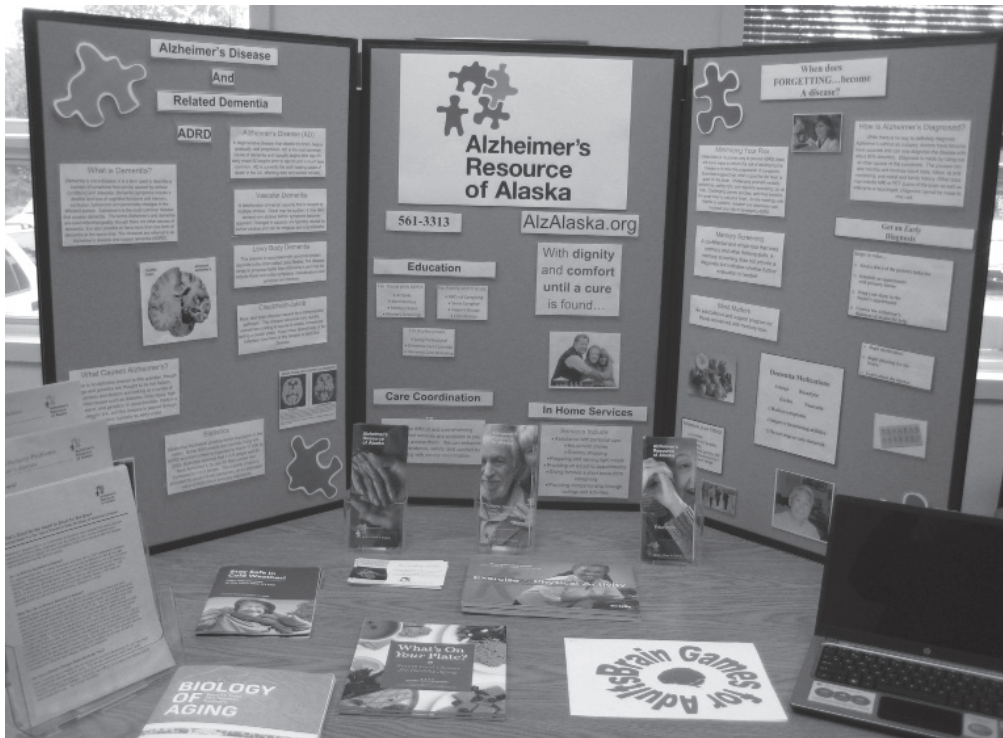


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Would you like to educate your employees or co-workers about Alzheimer's?



Take us to work! We can set up a table or make a brown bag presentation if you have the room or a group that is interested. Help us spread the word about the many essential services we offer as well as numerous educational opportunities for those who have a friend or loved one who may have Alzheimer's or related dementia. We also offer services for frail elders over 60. If you have any questions or would like to meet with our education director about possibly hosting our information board and materials, or having a guest speaker come in over lunch hour, please call 561-3313 or 1-800-478-1080.