

Decoding the Molecular Ties between Vascular Disease and Alzheimer's

Molecular Mechanisms of the Vascular Etiology of Alzheimer's Disease



Seeking a better understanding of vascular contributions to Alzheimer's disease, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has launched the Molecular Mechanisms of the Vascular Etiology of Alzheimer's Disease (M²OVE-AD)

Consortium, a team-science venture to build a nuanced model of Alzheimer's disease that more accurately reflects its many causes and pathways.

Scientists have long been interested in how the vascular system—the body's network of large and small blood vessels—may be involved in the onset and progression of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Scientists from diverse fields using the latest methodologies will work collaboratively towards shared goals: to dissect the complex

molecular mechanisms by which vascular risk factors influence Alzheimer's disease and identify new targets for treatment and prevention.

Developed by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), both part of NIH, the five-year, \$30-million program brings together over a dozen research teams working on five complementary projects. Harnessing the power of new molecular technologies and big data analytics, the teams will make biological datasets available to the wider research community.

"Despite evidence that the brains of most Alzheimer's patients have a variety of vascular lesions, and that mid-life diabetes and high blood pressure are major risk factors for Alzheimer's, our understanding of the molecular mechanisms involved is quite limited," said NIA Director Richard J. Hodes, M.D.

"M²OVE-AD will not only advance our understanding

Decoding Molecular, Page 4

The Connection between Down Syndrome and Alzheimer's Disease

Many, but not all, people with Down syndrome develop Alzheimer's disease when they get older.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia among older adults. Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning—thinking, remembering, and reasoning—and behavioral abilities to such an extent that it interferes with a person's daily life and activities.

People with Down syndrome are born with an extra copy of chromosome 21, which carries the APP gene. This gene produces a specific protein called amyloid precursor protein (APP).

Too much APP leads to a buildup of protein clumps called beta-amyloid plaques in the brain. By age 40, almost all people with Down syndrome have these plaques, along with other protein deposits, called tau tangles, which cause problems with

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Letter From The Executive Director

Greetings,

As we present our first newsletter of 2017, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a happy and healthy new year! In the coming year we are pursuing our strategic plan developed by our Board of Directors last year. The strategic direction is to advance our mission to ensure quality of life for those we serve and to prepare for the growth of these populations.



Alaskans experiencing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are expected to increase from 8,000 in 2015 to 14,000 by 2025.

Living with dementia is very challenging for both the individual and the family, especially as the disease progresses. With the right supports, people can have a high quality of life with purpose and joy and continue to live safely in their home for as long as feasible. Our Education and Care Coordination Programs provide these supports!

Studies also show that almost all people with Down syndrome will develop the brain changes associated with Alzheimer's disease by the age of 40. The majority will have clear symptoms of Alzheimer's disease (AD) in their 50s. As their longevity increases due to improved health generally, there is a prevalence of AD that is also on the rise. As we continue to learn more about the connection between Alzheimer's and Down syndrome, it becomes increasingly important that we also provide services for these Alaskans. Our Care Coordination Program is the largest, with the most expertise, of any agency in the state. We connect vulnerable Alaskans with the resource options that will meet their needs.

From Education to Care Coordination, we provide the needed supports to ensure quality of life. In the coming year we will continue to take actions that will allow us to serve more people who need our services and we will continue to rely on the expertise and dedication of our staff, Board and community partners to advance our mission.

Best Regards,

Karl Garber
Executive Director

Decoding the Molecular Ties *(from page 1)*

of these mechanisms, but also identify the molecular signatures—sets of genes, proteins and metabolites—that may be used as markers for disease risk or to track the effectiveness of promising therapies.”

The teams will generate several layers of molecular data from brain tissue donated by deceased Alzheimer’s research participants and from blood cells and plasma donated by living study participants with various types of vascular risk. They will then develop mathematical models of the molecular processes that link vascular risk factors to Alzheimer’s onset and progression by combining molecular data with data on cognition, brain imaging and several measures of vascular health.

In parallel, the teams will use a number of animal models that show different vascular disease traits to tease out the molecular mechanisms linking vascular risk factors and Alzheimer’s and to test the predictions made from the analyses of the human data.

“A growing body of research suggests vascular damage often contributes to Alzheimer’s disease,” said Roderick Corriveau, Ph.D., program director, NINDS. “This focused collaborative effort

may push our understanding of Alzheimer’s disease over a tipping point and facilitate the development of better treatments for those who are suffering.”

M²OVE-AD builds upon the open-science approach and the big-data infrastructure established by the Accelerating Medicines Partnership-Alzheimer’s Disease (AMP-AD), a precompetitive partnership between NIH, industry and nonprofit organizations to speed the discovery of promising therapeutic targets and disease biomarkers.

“Breaking down the traditional barriers to collaboration and data-sharing is key to moving the science forward, so we’ve ensured that the

discoveries each team makes can be rapidly shared among the Consortium and the wider research community,” said Suzana Petanceska, Ph.D., senior advisor for strategic development and partnerships in the NIA Division of Neuroscience.

“We’ve also established a panel of external leading experts to help shape the direction of M²OVE-AD research and potentially, bring about new partnerships and avenues of investigation.”

For additional projects supported by M²OVE-AD visit: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/newsroom/2016/03/decoding-molecular-ties-between-vascular-disease-and-alzheimers>.

National Institute on Aging

Take Classes
Get Support
Find Resources



Our Education team provides information, consultations, trainings and referrals throughout the entire state.
www.alzaska.org



Why a Legacy Gift?

Share in our commitment to assist all those who turn to us for help. Please consider a legacy gift to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. Your leadership contribution will secure a brighter future for those individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and individual with any disability. Your gift will be instrumental in sustaining vital caregiver programs and services.

Benefits of a Legacy Bequest

Planned gifts offer the opportunity to commemorate or memorialize a family member, friend or loved one. We will recognize your gift in a heartfelt and dignified manner that meets with your wishes.

Legacy contributions allow Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska to plan ahead with assured confidence. In establishing a planned gift, you also establish a life-long relationship with an organization committed to providing education and care coordination to the communities we serve.

Planned gifts provide the opportunity to maximize and maintain the value of your estate for your family and loved ones. As charitable donations, planned gifts can result in tax savings for your estate.

“There are no words that can express my gratitude for my family and all the families that you touch. That's why I have included Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska in my estate planning.”

- M.G. Wasilla, AK

Gift in Your Will

Every gift made to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska is greatly appreciated. We want to be there – today and for years to come. You can ensure our work continues by leaving a legacy contribution, a special way to remember those who no longer can.

Chances are, you know someone who has been touched by this devastating disease. Your gift will help transform their care. If you would like more information on bequests contact our development department in Anchorage at 561-3313 and ask for Lorraine Guyer.



Employee Spotlight: Gay Wellman

Gay Wellman is an Education Specialist at Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. For 10 years, Gay's role at the agency has been a special one because she helps us reach people across the entire state through webinars and online support groups. All you need is an internet connection or a telephone. Starting in January, Gay will be offering her telephone support group at a new evening time once a month. We know that some caregivers are working part-time and even full-time and we want to make this critical resource available to as many people as possible.

“Support groups are really critical, anytime you're being stretched like a care giver is being stretched, you can benefit from additional support,” Gay said. The advantage of the phone group is that you don't even have to leave home to attend.

Gay encourages all caregivers to attend a support group. It's a place for people to share triumphs, concerns and find comfort with others experiencing similar situations. She also makes note that this group is for all caregivers and that no matter what the person they are caring for is experiencing, the trials of the caregiver are very similar.

If you think you, or someone you know, could benefit from this, or any other support group, see page 11 for more information. If the idea of a support group makes you uncomfortable, Gay is happy to talk to you one-on-one to help ease your discomfort before you join the group. She can be reached at 907-822-5620.

Save Date...

Haggis Basher's Ball & Burns Supper

Venue: Sheraton Anchorage

Date: January 28

Schedule: Drinks served at 6 p.m.
Festivities begin at 6:55 p.m.

Attire: Kilt, Black Tie, or Business Suit

Join us for a gala event including a four-course meal, scotch at every table, Highland Pipers, entertaining speeches and dancing.

Purchase single seats or corporate tables.
Sponsorships also available.

The ball will benefit
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska.

Northwest Geriatric Education Series

10 weeks of high quality geriatric trainings via virtual classroom.

January 3-March 7

Join us at Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska in Anchorage or Palmer to attend trainings by Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center.

- Medicare 101
- Alphabet Soup of Medicare Provisions Under the ACA
- Geriatric Oral Health
- Intellectual/Development Disabilities in Older Adults
- Kidney Disease & Functional Decline in Older Alaskans
- ...and more

\$10/training or \$60 for the series. Optional CEs +\$40.

Register at www.akcache.org

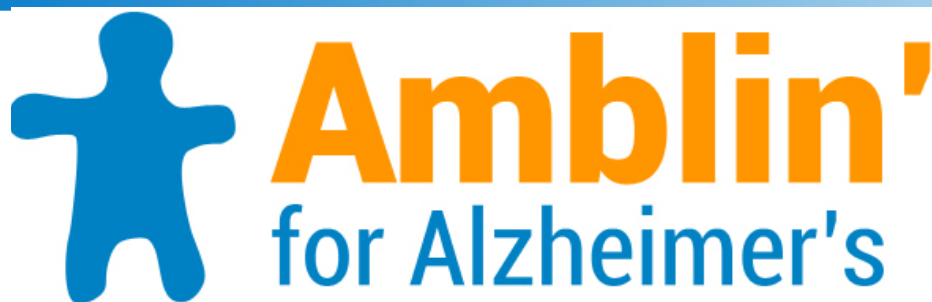
"Positive Approach To Care Skills" Workshop

**"Dementia does not rob someone
of their dignity, it's our reaction to
them that does."**

- Teepa Snow

Join us in Anchorage and Fairbanks April 25 & 27 for enlightening and interactive training sessions taught by two skills mentors from Teepa Snow's Positive Approach LLC.

Space will be limited. Watch for registration information in the coming months.



Register or Sponsor Today!
www.alzalaska.org/amblin-for-alzheimers/

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Walter E. and Barbara A. Bauke Foundation

May 6, 2017
at 9 a.m.



Down Syndrome *(from page 1)*

how brain cells function and increase the risk of developing Alzheimer's dementia.

However, not all people with these brain plaques will develop the symptoms of Alzheimer's. Estimates suggest that 50 percent or more of people with Down syndrome will develop dementia due to Alzheimer's disease as they age.

Many people with Down syndrome begin to show symptoms of Alzheimer's disease in their 50s or 60s.

But, like in all people with Alzheimer's, changes in the brain that lead to these symptoms are thought to begin at least 10 years earlier.

These brain changes include the buildup of plaques and tangles, the loss of connections between nerve cells, the death of nerve

cells, and the shrinking of brain tissue (called atrophy).

The risk for Alzheimer's disease increases with age, so it's important to watch for certain changes in behavior.

Keep in mind, though, that not all dementia symptoms are caused by Alzheimer's disease. Other conditions, such as medication side effects, depression, and kidney, thyroid, and liver problems, can also cause dementia symptoms. Some of these conditions can be treated and reversed. Currently, Alzheimer's disease has no cure, and no medications have been approved to treat Alzheimer's in people with Down syndrome.

National Institute on Aging



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Resource
of Alaska**

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Our Care Coordination team provides you with the information you need to select your own health care, financial and social services, advocating for you to help you reach your goals and maximize your independence.
www.alzalaska.org

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Classes & Events around the state

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1750 Abbott Road
561-3313

ABC Presentations

Assisted Living:

Who, How & When

Monday, 1/16
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

When a Loved One Wanders

Monday, 1/23
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

Making Visits Positive

Monday, 2/6
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

Home & Community Safety

Monday, 2/13
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

Fall Prevention

Monday, 2/20
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

When Does Forgetting Become a Disease?

Monday, 3/6
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

Medicaid Waiver

Monday, 3/20
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

Working Through Grief I

Monday, 3/27
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

Working Through Grief II

Monday, 4/3
10-11:30am or 5:30-7pm

Savvy Caregiver

Saturdays, 1/7 to 2/11
10am-Noon
Mondays, 2/13 to 3/20
1-3 pm
Registration is required.

Mind Matters I *

Wednesdays, 2/22 to 4/12
10 - 11:30am

Mind Matters II *

Thursdays, 2/23 to 4/13
10-11:30 am

Brain Works *

Tuesdays, 2/21 to 4/11
10-11:30 am

Art Links

Fridays - Every Week
11-12:00 pm

MAT-SU

10355 Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.
746-3413

ABC Presentations

Legal Issues for Caregivers

Monday, 1/23
1-2:30pm 5:30-7pm

Healthy Body, Healthy Brain

Wednesday, 2/15
1-2:30pm

Healthy Body, Healthy Brain

Thursday, 2/16
5:30-7pm
(Mat-Su Health Services 1363
W. Spruce Ave. Wasilla, AK)

Driving and Dementia

Tuesday, 3/21
1-2:30 pm or 5:30-7pm

Savvy Caregiver

Saturdays, 3/18 to 4/15
10am - noon
Registration required.

Mind Matters *

Wednesdays, 1/4 to 2/22
10:30am-noon

Wednesdays, 3/15 to 5/3
10:30am - noon

Art Links

Fridays - Every Week
1-2pm

Dementia Care Essentials

Thursdays, 1/26 to 2/23
11am-1pm
Registration required.

NW Geriatric Education Winter Series

Tuesdays, 1/3 to 3/7
3-4:30 pm

**Attend at our Anchorage
or Mat-Su Valley offices**

JUNEAU

3225 Hospital Dr. 586-6044
586-6044

ABC Presentations

Intro to ADRD

Thursday, 1/19
Noon-1:30pm

Honoring Connection

Thursday, 2/16
Noon-1:30 PM

Dining and Dementia

Thursday, 3/16
Noon-1:30 PM

Behaviors That Challenge Us

Thursday, 4/13
Noon-1:30 PM

Dementia Care Essentials

Wednesdays, 3/1 to 3/29
10 am-Noon
Registration required.

**Participants Require
Pre-Screening*

FAIRBANKS

565 University Ave. #2
452-2277

ABC Presentations

Overview of Alzheimer's Disease

Wednesday, 1/25
5:30-7 pm

End of Life Issues

Wednesday, 2/22
5:30-7 pm

Legal Issues

Thursday, 3/16
5:30-7 pm

Savvy Caregiver

Mondays, 2/27 - 4/3
5:30-7:30 PM
Registration is required.

Mind Matters *

Thursdays, 1/26 - 3/16
1:00-2:30 pm

Art Links

Thursdays - Every Week
11am-12:00 pm

Dementia Care Workshop

Tuesday, 2/28
1-6pm
Registration required.

Webinars **Connect with us via** **GoToMeeting or by** **Telephone**

Registration is required.

STATEWIDE PROFESSIONAL

Contact Amber Smith
907-586-6044

Mouth Care Without a Battle

Presented by Kim Jung
Tuesday, 1/17
Noon-1pm

Medicaid Waiver

Presented by Jane Haiar
Tuesday, 2/21
Noon-1pm

Communication Tips for Caregivers

Tuesday, 3/21
Noon-1pm

STATEWIDE

Contact Gay Wellman
907-822-5620

ABC Webinars

Middle Stages

Thursday, 1/5
7-8:30 pm

Honoring Connections

Thursday, 2/9
7-8:30 pm

Activities of Daily Living

Thursday, 3/9
7-8:30 pm

Late Stage

Thursday, 4/13
7-8:30 pm

Savvy Caregiver Webinar

Contact Gay Wellman
907-822-5620
Tuesdays, 1/17-2/21
7-9 pm



Support Groups around the state

A safe place for caregivers, family and friends of persons with dementia to share experiences and solutions.

Statewide Telephone Support Group

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska	Caregiver	1st Wednesday 7-8 PM 3rd Wednesday 2-3 PM Dial in 1-877-216-1555, Code 927989	Gay Wellman 822-5620 or (800) 478-1080 x5
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Anchorage

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 1750 Abbott Rd.	Caregiver Caregiver	2nd Thursday 4th Thursday	12PM-1:30 PM 5:30-7:00 PM	Debbie Chulick 561-3313
Chester Park Cooperative 2020 Muldoon Rd.	Caregiver	1st & 3rd Friday	10 -11:30 AM	Kim Jung 561-3313

Eagle River

Holy Spirit Episcopal Church 17545 N. Eagle River Loop Rd.	Caregiver	2nd Thursday	6:30-8:00 PM	Linda Shepard 746-3413
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Fairbanks

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 565 University Ave. Suite 2	Caregiver	1st & 3rd Tuesday 2nd Tuesday	11:30-1:00 PM 5:30-7:00 PM	Joan Adams 452-2277
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Homer

Homer Senior Center	Caregiver	2 & 4th Thursdays	2:30-3:30 PM	235-7655
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Juneau

Southeast Senior Services 419 Sixth Street	Caregiver	Call for more information		463-6177 or (866)746-6177
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Ketchikan

Ketchikan Senior Center Upper Level	Caregiver	Call for more information		Bernice 225-8080
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Kodiak

Kodiak Senior Center 302 Erskine Ave.	Caregiver	4th Thursday	12:30-1:30 PM	486-6181
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Mat-Su Valley

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.	Caregiver	2nd Wednesday	1-2:30 PM	Linda Shepard 746-3413
AK Veterans & Pioneer Home	Caregiver	First Fridays	10:00-11:30 AM	Janice Downing 746-3413

Seward

Seward Senior Center	Caregiver	4th Thursday	1-2 PM	224-5604
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Sitka

Brave Heart Volunteers 120 Katlian Street	Caregiver	Call for more info.		747-4600
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Soldotna

Soldotna Senior Center	Caregiver	2nd & Last Tuesday	1-3 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
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Sterling

Sterling Senior Center	Caregiver	1st Tuesday	1-2 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
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