



**Pharmacology
Research
Institute**

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for Quality Medical Care**

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A Potential New Vaccine Against Alzheimer's Disease

By: Daniel E. Grosz, M.D.

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is a disease that attacks and destroys nerve cells in the brain. It is the major cause of memory loss and dementia in older adults. Currently there are approximately 4 million Americans with AD. As America becomes grayer, a.k.a. the "baby boomers" get older, the number of people with AD will increase significantly.

AD causes a slow, progressive loss of memory. At first only short-term memory is affected. Over time, patients with AD lose their ability to make decisions or judge situations correctly. People in the last stages of AD are often unable to perform basic activities, such as feeding and dressing.

Unfortunately, despite years of scientific research, we still do not know how to prevent AD. Research has identified risk factors, such as age, genetics and head injury, but these risks cannot be changed or controlled.

After years of Alzheimer's research, scientists have identified changes in the brain that occur in people with AD. Scientists found that people with AD have brains that look different than people without AD. The main difference is that patients with AD have areas in their brains that have sticky plaques and clumps of tangled

nerve fibers. Researchers believe that these plaques and tangles disrupt the organization of the brain and cause the nerve cells to stop relating to one another. When nerve cells stop communicating, they gradually waste away and die. Over time, the death of these nerve cells causes atrophy or a decrease in the size of the brain.

Acetylcholine is a neurotransmitter found in the areas of the brain responsible for most memory formation. Current FDA approved treatments for AD focus on medications that raise the levels of the chemical acetylcholine (i.e. Cognex®, Aricept®, Exelon®, and Reminyl®). Unfortunately, these medications do not address the underlying structural problems within the brain.

While current treatments are only able to treat the symptoms of AD, exciting new therapies are being tested. One of the most exciting of the new treatments is a potential new vaccine. *Hopefully* the vaccine will prevent the development of plaques and reverse some of the damage to the nerve cells of patients with AD. The vaccine is a combination of a protein that is similar to one produced by the brains of patients with AD and a substance which helps stimulate the production of antibodies



by the immune system. It is hoped that this immune response will slow the progress of AD.

PRI is proud to be one of the only 8 U.S. sites that has been selected to test this new vaccine. We will be enrolling patients this fall at our Northridge office. Please feel free to contact PRI, if you would like more information about this exciting study.

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PRI Los Alamitos Moves to a New, “Award Winning” Location!

By: Charles S. Wilcox, Ph.D.

Over the *Labor Day* weekend our Los Alamitos team moved into new and larger office space, at the architecturally award-winning Katella Corporate Center, here in Los Alamitos. Only 7/10ths of a mile east of our prior location, our new address is 4281 Katella Avenue, Suite 115, Los Alamitos, CA 90720-3589. Our new “main number” is 714.827.3667, our new 24-hour “on-call” number is 714.827.3668.

While still very close to the 605, 405, 22 and 91 Freeways, our new office is now within walking distance to numerous shops, services and restaurants. Subsequent to the expansion of PRI’s Northridge office, over these past twelve months we have relocated our Riverside, Newport Beach and



4281 Katella Avenue, Suite 115

(now) Los Alamitos offices to larger and newer facilities to better serve you.

In parallel with these efforts, our Institute has been awarded a number of very important research grants. Over these next 24 months we will be evaluating some of the most exciting and promising new medications in our history. As we enter our 27th year, we feel

exceedingly fortunate to have the professional team, expanded space and truly novel new projects to significantly contribute to the advancement of medicine. We are, as always, most appreciative of our study participants support, trust *and* involvement in these endeavors. Together, we are making positive strides!

What is a Migraine Headache?

By: Susan Janko, RN, MS, NP

Migraine is much more than just a bad headache. It is a painful medical condition that affects more than 30 million Americans and is one of the leading causes of missed time from school or work.

What causes a migraine?

While researchers have not identified the exact cause of migraine it seems that migraine has a biological basis and that heredity plays a significant role.

How does a person know if he or she is experiencing migraines?

The International Headache Society (IHS) has developed useful criteria to distinguish migraine from other types of headache.

The criteria include:

1. Between 2 and 8 attacks per month
2. Headaches that last 4 to 72 hours
3. Throbbing or pounding head pain, usually on one side
4. Pain increased by movement
5. Accompanying nausea or vomiting, or increased sensitivity to light, sound and smell.

How can migraine attacks be avoided?

Often becoming familiar with one’s individual headache pattern and triggers can go a long way in preventing attacks. Headache experts also recommend having regular mealtimes, waking up at

the same time each morning, not smoking, avoiding excessive caffeine, and regular exercise.

What treatments are available?

In recent years there have been exciting breakthroughs in the treatment of this painful and often debilitating disorder. A class of drugs called “triptans” has been found to effectively relieve migraine pain in a large number of sufferers. PRI has been in the forefront of research with these compounds and has been actively involved in the development of even newer, more effective treatments. If you or someone you know suffers from migraines we may be able to help.

Caring for a Loved One with Alzheimer's

By Arnelle Hardy RN, MSN, NP

Caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease is challenging. The following information is to provide you (the caregiver) with some tips on how to handle various caregiving responsibilities, without neglecting your own mental and physical health.

Alzheimer's disease can cause a person to exhibit unusual and unpredictable behaviors, including:

- Mood swings
- Verbal or physical aggression
- Anxiety
- Wandering/pacing
- Incontinence
- Insomnia

These changes can lead to frustration and tension for the caregiver. Responding to these sometimes challenging behaviors by staying calm and flexible will make your job easier. Although it is hard, try not to argue or to convince the person of your point of view. This will only increase their agitation and frustration. It is important not to take new behaviors personally. Accepting these changes as part of the disease will make them easier to work through.

Since no two individuals

experience Alzheimer's disease in the same manner, there is no way to predict what your role as a caregiver will entail.

Responsibilities may include:

- Making important legal decisions
- Managing changes in your loved one's behavior
- Helping your loved one bathe or get dressed
- Assistance with their previous activities such as preparing meals or paying bills

You can help the person maintain as much independence as possible, by providing them with cues. Promoting their independence will make your role as caregiver a little easier. The *more* independent the person with Alzheimer's disease is, the *less* you will have to do for them. For example, if they cannot remember where their clothes are, label the drawers and closet with pictures of the clothing items. This will help them orient themselves and may allow them to dress themselves for a little longer.

More than 80 percent of caregivers report experiencing high levels of stress. It is important to

remember that you are not alone. Caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's takes a lot of attention and patience, which means you need to recognize when you need a break. Friends and family members are often willing to help, if asked.

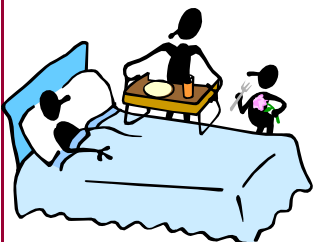
If you find you need more support, you may want to look into respite care services. Adult day services, companion services, and in-home care may be available in your neighborhood. The Alzheimer's Association at 1-800-272-3900 can help you identify important resources in your area. Furthermore, you may be eligible for In-Home Supportive Services (Please see list below).

Remember that each stage of the disease is different. As time goes on, your needs will change. Discussing each change with your loved one's doctor will make it easier for you to anticipate what help you will need. Do not forget to care for yourself! You have a difficult job to do, and it is important to use any resource available to you.

In-Home Supportive Services

IHSS is a county-run program that assists seniors with financial constraints by paying for in-home help. To qualify, the senior citizen must be at least 65 years old and meet certain financial as well as other guidelines. The IHSS program can pay for limited housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry, etc.

The following is a partial list of offices in the greater Los Angeles Area:



- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| • West L.A. | (310) 312-6292 | • Orange County | (714) 825-3000 |
| • East L.A. | (323) 727-4145 | • San Fernando Valley | (818) 901-4362 |
| • South L.A. | (323) 418-3370 | • Riverside | (800) 491-7123 |
| • Central L.A. | (213) 744-4477 | • Pomona | (888) 944-4477 |

What's New at PRI?

Memory Loss?

Alzheimer's Disease?

PRI's physicians and nurses have been involved in anti-memory loss research since the 1970s. We have studies for Memory Loss/Alzheimer's disease at each of our locations. We are currently testing a medicine for moderate-to-severe memory loss, which is now on the market in 23 other countries. Also, PRI's Northridge office is one of the only 8 US research centers to be studying the highly publicized new research "vaccine" for AD.

Anxiety? Nervousness?

According to a large study, the average person who suffers from anxiety waits roughly 15 years before seeking treatment for anxiety—and usually for physical problems associated with anxiety. We encourage you to "reach-out" before you physically "wear-out"! Anxiety can be treated.

Depression?

PRI's expertise in depression research has enabled our Institute to be awarded new research grants involving several different "classes" of

antidepressants. We are now enrolling people in our newest depression research medication study at each location.

Migraine Headaches?

Research on new anti-migraine medications has literally exploded over the past ten years—and it's about time! The physical, emotional, economic and "quality of life" impacts endured by migraineurs are tremendous and so are the benefits associated with effective treatment.

For more information on PRI's programs for Memory Loss, Anxiety, Depression or Migraine Headaches, please call the nearest office.

The PRI Bulletin is an official publication of the Pharmacology Research Institute and is intended for patients and friends of the Institute. PRI does not rent, sell or trade its mailing list with any other organization or company. Your personal information is kept completely confidential. Inquiries and changes of address may be directed to any one of the sites below.

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