

### SUPPORT GROUP

**Mild Cognitive Impairment**  
Education & Support Group for  
Families affected by MCI

**Next Meeting: Aug. 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 9:30am**

**Topic: To be announced**

**Speaker: To be announced**

**Location:**

**Senior Friendship  
Center- Center for  
Healthy Aging  
1900 Brother Geenen  
Way, Sarasota**

#### THE MEMORY DISORDER CLINIC

##### Medical Director

Bruce E. Robinson, MD, MPH

##### Clinical Team

Alan Grindal, MD, Neurology

Theodore Probst, MD, Neurology

Amy Barr, Ph.D., Neuropsychology

##### Program Coordinator

Kathleen Houseweart, MBA

##### Editors

Amy Sapanero

Lorelei Lindenaux-Balazs LMHC

Sponsored by Sarasota Memorial

Hospital and State of Florida

Department of Elder Affairs

## Agitation and Mood Changes

Although dementia is a memory disorder, many people with dementia also develop mood changes, anxiety, depression or agitation. Agitation can take many forms. As the disease progresses, symptoms can include delusions, hallucinations, restlessness, wandering and sleep disturbances.

Persons with dementia often experience emotional distress, general anxiety or behavioral changes that are called "agitation". In its mild forms it may look like the person is just nervous, worried or stubborn. These slight personality changes are usually not difficult for the caregiver to handle. In its more severe form, a loved one might become an exit-seeker, disruptive or even dangerous. They may become unusually angry, frustrated or refuse to cooperate with care.

A person with dementia is more easily agitated because their brain has been damaged or no longer functions in a healthy manner. A caregiver should look for the cause of the agitation. These causes might be:

- **Physical/ Medical** problems such as an undiagnosed illness or pain is often an underlying cause of agitation. They are usually short in duration and improve when the medical problem improves.
- **Psychiatric** problems such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, anger and aggression are common in certain stages of the progression of Alzheimer's disease.
- **Environmental** stresses or changes can also cause problems. The ideal environment would be calm, comforting and structured.
- **Sleep** problems are also common. A structured, active day with limited caffeine and alcohol can improve this issue.

Agitation should be identified and treated early. The key is to identify the factors that trigger these behaviors and avoid those triggers.

## Geriatric Care Managers Can Help:

A geriatric care manager is a professional who develops and implements a care plan to assist the older population and their families in meeting their long term needs. Developing a care plan and putting it into place can be a short-term process if there is family willing and available to do the follow-up work. However, if there is no family in the area, the care managers can provide long-term assistance.

General services include:

- Conducting a care-planning assessment to identify problems and service needs.
- Evaluation of physical, functional and emotional states as well as home safety issues.
- Recommending community and private resources.
- Act as a liaison to local and long distance caregivers.
- Arrange and monitor in home services.
- Offer counseling and support.

Before hiring a care manager, interview several. Also have clear expectations of the type of services needed. A responsible care manager can be an important part of a comprehensive plan to live independently.

---

### Caring for the Caregiver

Caregivers must realize that they will not handle every situation perfectly. At times they will become impatient with their loved one. It is important to realize their limitations and accept how they manage particular situations. Allow other family members to play a role in providing support when needed.

## Question & Answer

**Q:** My dad has been driving for many years and although he has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease, he seems to do ok. How do I know when to take away his keys?

**A:** This is always a difficult question. Having a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease does not mean that one cannot drive. However we do know that those with memory impairment are at increased risk for accidents. The question is not whether your dad can get start the car, and get to somewhere he has been many times before. The real question is if he is faced with an unusual situation (even one he did not cause), will he have all the brain capacity necessary to make right decision.

Giving up driving is often a devastating loss. A first step might be to have your dad evaluated at one of the two local driver's evaluation programs in Sarasota. While waiting for the evaluation, start planning for a time when he might not be able to drive. Encourage your dad to reduce his driving, allow others to drive, and plan trips during the least congested time of day. Also if there is no one available to drive him daily, look for alternatives forms of transportation so that he can continue to enjoy activities that interest him. Safety must be your first concern. Your dad's safety and the safety of others on the road can be affected when memory and judgment are impaired. Additional tips on driving and memory loss are available from the Memory Disorder Clinic.

**If you have a question that you would like to have answered in the newsletter just write to:** Amy Sapanero, Editor  
Memory Disorder Clinic  
5880 Rand Blvd. #205  
Sarasota, FL 34238

**Look for your answer in an upcoming newsletter.**

## “Dining with Friends”

Dine Out for a Good Cause August 7th-  
Dine out at a participating restaurant and  
a portion of their proceeds on August 7<sup>th</sup>  
will go to the Senior Friendship Center!  
All you have to do is go out to eat!

For a complete list of participating restaurants  
visit [www.seniorfriendship.com](http://www.seniorfriendship.com) or call 1-866-  
955-2122

---

Did you know?

- Every 72 seconds, someone develops Alzheimer's. There are now more than 5 million people in the US living with Alzheimer's.
  - Experts estimate that nearly half of Americans over 85 have Alzheimer's disease because increasing age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's. In fact, Alzheimer's is growing at an epidemic rate. Left unchecked, the number of people with the disease could reach 16 million by 2050.
- 

### Free Memory Screenings

The Memory Disorder Clinic offers **free memory screenings** at The Senior Friendship Centers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month in Sarasota and on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month in Venice. Call (941) 917-7197 to schedule an appointment.

### Comedy Corner

*We know we are getting older when our secrets are safe with our friends because they can't remember them either.*



## North County Outreach Begins

The Memory Disorder Clinic of Sarasota Memorial Hospital is expanding outreach efforts to the northern part of the County. Memory Disorder Clinic staff will be available to offer Free Memory Screenings for older adults who have concerns about memory trouble on Monday August 20, at the North Sarasota Public Library. The short screening tests will help determine if memory trouble exists. Staff will provide test results in writing, and assist in referring individuals to the right services and treatment. Information on research opportunities will also be available. These screenings are primarily for older adults and must be scheduled in advance. Initial screenings take only 15 minutes. A longer screening for research participation will also be available.

**When:** August 20, 2007

**Location:** North Sarasota Public Library  
2801 Newtown Blvd  
Sarasota, Florida 34234

**Appointments must be scheduled in advance. Call 917-7197. Ask for Lorelei.**

---

### NEW Location for Memory Clinic

**Sarasota Memorial Hospital  
Memory Disorder Clinic  
Institute for Advanced Medicine  
5880 Rand Blvd., # 205  
Sarasota, FL 34238  
(941) 917-7197**

**Located just 1/2 mile from I-75 on the south side of Clark Road.**

[www.sarasotageriatrics.com](http://www.sarasotageriatrics.com)