

SUPPORT GROUP

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

Next Meeting: Sept. 20th

Time: 9:30am

Topic: Nurturing Souls

**Speaker: Lorelei
Lindenaux- Balazs, LMHC**

Location:

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

THE MEMORY DISORDER CLINIC

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SUNDOWNING AND SHADOWING

People with memory impairments often have behavior problems in the late afternoon and evening. They may become demanding, suspicious, upset or disoriented, see or hear things that are not there and believe things that aren't true, or they may pace or wander around the house when others are sleeping.

While experts are unsure how or why this behavior occurs, they suspect that the problem of late afternoon confusion, which is sometimes called "sundowning," or "sundown syndrome," may be due to these factors: The impaired person may:

- not be able to see well in dim light and becomes confused.
- have a hormone imbalance or a disturbance in his/her "biological clock."
- tire at the end of the day and is less able to cope with stress.
- be involved in activities all day long and grows restless if there's nothing to do in the late afternoon or evening.

Try these ways to lesson the behaviors of "sundowning":

- Make afternoon and evening hours less hectic. Schedule appointments, trips and activities such as baths or showers early in the day.
- Help the person to use up extra energy through exercise. For the person who tends to pace or wander in the evening, you may want to arrange at least one or two brisk walks during the day.
- Control the person's diet. Reduce foods and beverages with caffeine (chocolate, coffee, tea, and soda) or restrict them to the morning hours to reduce agitation and sleeplessness. An early dinner or late afternoon snack may also help. (continued page 2)

Sundowning (Continued)

- Provide regular activities and you may want to discourage napping during the day if nighttime sleeplessness is a problem.
- Reduce the level of noise from radios, televisions or stereos, control the number of people who visit in the evening hours, or confine noisier family activities to another area of the house.
- Make it easy for the person to use the bathroom. Consider a bedside urinal or commode. Or encourage the person to use the bathroom before going to bed.

Shadowing

"Sundowning" is often accompanied by "shadowing," where the person with memory impairments follows or mimics the caregiver, or talks, interrupts, and ask questions repeatedly. At times, the person may become upset if the caregiver wants to be alone. While shadowing and other forms of agitation vary from person to person, you may be able to manage the behavior by following these steps:

Consider these:

- How long does the behavior last?
- What time of day does it occur?
- Is the behavior triggered by certain people or surroundings?
- What seems to calm the impaired person?

Once you develop answers to these questions, you may be able to avoid the situations that bring about agitation and introduce activities that help calm the person with Alzheimer's.

Try to keep the person occupied. Find simple, repetitious activities to occupy the person even if you could do them better on your own. Possibilities include folding the wash, dusting, stacking papers or magazines, stuffing envelopes, or winding a ball of yarn. Or provide

the person with Alzheimer's with headphones for listening to calming music.

Seek help. Join a support group. Caregivers are always discovering new ways to deal with behaviors such as shadowing and sundowning and are happy to share them.

Remain flexible and consider the person's needs.

While people with Alzheimer's may find it difficult to sleep in their beds, they may fall asleep more easily on the living room couch or in a reclining chair.

Reassure and comfort the person. Tell the person experiencing sundowning what time it is and what's going on in the house. Let the person know you're there and will remain there. Then try to involve the person in a meaningful activity such as setting the table, folding towels, doing dishes, or sweeping the floor.

Avoid arguing or asking for explanations. The person may not know what's wrong or be able to tell you if he does. Keep in mind that the person with Alzheimer's has no control over annoying, repetitive behavior. Confusion and restlessness occur because the brain can no longer sort out cues in the environment.

A better understanding of the feelings of the person with Alzheimer's disease or memory impairments, such as fear, frustration, and anger, may help you accept the resulting behaviors. Providing reassurance and helping your loved one respond to his/ her changing environment can help you manage the person's behavior.

*****Memory Workshop*****

Free Photo Memory / Story Writing Workshop Begins October 15th Call Lorelei 941-917-7197 for details and registration.

Frontotemporal dementia (FTD)

Frontotemporal dementia is a rare disorder that affects the front (frontal lobes) and the sides (temporal lobes) of the brain. Because these regions often, but not always, shrink, brain imaging can be useful in diagnosis.

There is no specific abnormality associated with all cases of frontotemporal dementia. In one type called Pick's disease, there are abnormal microscopic deposits called Pick bodies, but these are not always present.

Symptoms

- A more rapid onset than in Alzheimer's disease.
- The first symptoms often involve changes in personality, judgment, planning and social functioning. Individuals may make rude or off-color remarks to family or strangers. They may make unwise decisions about finances or personal matters.
- Individuals' feelings may seem disconnected from the situation. They may show apathy and loss of interest or excessive happiness and excitement.
- Individuals may have a strong desire to eat or have other compulsive behaviors.

Unfortunately, there are no treatments approved for frontotemporal dementia. Managing the behavioral symptoms of FTD can be difficult. Often specialists such as a psychiatrist can be helpful.

Comedy Corner

Old age doesn't cause memory problems...having too many things to remember causes memory problems.



Save the Date



**October 16, 2007
10am or 3pm**

**“Walk A Mile In My Shoes”
Psychologist Exposes Life with
Alzheimer's Disease**

**Richard Taylor, Ph.D. will be at Arden
Courts to R.S.V.P or for more
information call
925-3900**



New Simplistic Phones

A new company has developed a simple cell phone for seniors to use. This cell phone has large buttons that are easy to see and use. The offer personalized operator service for any assistance needed. The phone is even hearing aid compatible. This phone may be worth looking into. For more information or for a free brochure call 1-800-383-4593.

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