



Me Time Monday™ Tip Sheet for Caregivers in support of the Healthy Monday Campaign

Women and Alzheimer's disease – What To Know Tips

When it comes to Alzheimer's disease, women are more at risk to feel the full impact of the disease. A recent [Shriver Report](#) found that more than 10 million women are affected by Alzheimer's...they are either diagnosed with the disease or they are caring for someone with a form of dementia.

Since statistics show us that every 70 seconds someone develops Alzheimer's and that Americans over the age of 85 have a 50 percent chance of developing the disease. As a family caregiver, and a woman warrior, it is time to take action.

How Women Can Wage War on Alzheimer's disease

- **Take care of yourself.** First of all – take care of yourself and your health to avoid developing chronic illness that can lead to Alzheimer's disease. Studies show that cardiovascular disease and diabetes can be risk factors for developing Alzheimer's later in life. Ensure you “know your numbers.” Check the [Weight Control Information Network](#) maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institutes of Health to find out what these numbers mean and how to maintain healthy scores:
 1. Maintain a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or lower
 2. Keep your waist measurement at 35 inches or less
 3. Get at least 30 minutes of cardio-vascular exercise a day (walking briskly, riding a bike, climbing stairs at work or other blood pumping exercise).

- **Know the early warning signs.** Fifty percent of those with Alzheimer's disease go undiagnosed today. By understanding the difference between typical forgetfulness that we all have as we age and the signs of Alzheimer's disease, your family can start to plan ahead for your loved one and the long caregiving journey you may be taking.
 1. Start with the Alzheimer's Association [10 Early Warning Signs](#) found on their Web site.
 2. If you notice that your loved one has some of these signs, the [Alzheimer's Association](#) has resources for you to learn more about clinical trials and treatments as well as tips on how to help families plan ahead.

- **Manage your stress.** As you take on caregiving responsibilities, stress becomes a caregiver's number one enemy that can lead to other health risks. Check out our separate [Caregiver Tip Sheet on Stress Relief](#), but also think about the following:
 1. Take a [Caregiver Stress Test](#) found on the Alzheimer's Association web site. If you score off the charts, talk to your doctor about what to do to manage your stress better.
 2. Check out great online resources such as [Caring.com's "Steps and Stages"](#) that can give you insights on how to plan for the transitions of care you may be facing by caring with a loved one with Alzheimer's.
 3. Get help online – by surrounding yourself with friends, family, co-workers, etc. who can give you a break – you will create the stamina you need physically and the emotional support network necessary to continue to care. Check out [Lotsa Helping Hands](#) which helps you do just that (or have a friend create the private community for you if you do not have time).

For other Me Time Monday Tips from the Caregiving Club, visit: <http://www.caregivingclub.com/me-time-monday/>

For more information about the Healthy Mondays campaigns, visit: www.mondaycampaigns.org

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