



HEALTH & Aging



Memory care *a component of assisted living*

Aging brings about many changes, including some that may compromise seniors' ability to remain independent. In such instances, many families consider assisted living facilities for their aging relatives.

More than 835,000 Americans currently reside in assisted living communities, according to the National Center for Assisted Living. While communities and homes provide various services, one service in particular may be needed for seniors with Alzheimer's disease, other dementias or memory problems. Memory care units are separate facilities that cater to people with dementia or other memory issues.

According to the senior residence referral and resource guide A Place for Mom, memory care is a distinct form of long-term skilled nursing. Also called special care units, memory care facilities provide 24-hour supervised care for individuals. This care is often carried out in a separate wing or floor of a residential facility or community.

Memory care facilities aim to provide a safe and secure environment for residents. This means limiting entry or egress to other areas of the facility for those who may have trouble navigating and remembering where they started out. The Alzheimer's Association notes that six in 10 people with dementia will wander and become disoriented. This is

dangerous for the individual and others. Memory care units often have alarms and "wander guard" precautions in place to make sure residents cannot roam unsupervised and risk injury.

Another goal of memory care is to provide a stress-free, structured lifestyle that has set schedules and routines, states Brookdale Senior Living. This can help keep distress minimal and make for more comfortable and happy residents.

In addition, memory care units offer programs that help slow the progression of dementias and cultivate cognitive skills. Fitness exercises, games, specialty food programs, activities, and much more may be offered to make residents more comfortable. Memory care facilities include common spaces for socialization, meals and activities.

"Alzheimer's patients must maintain their activity, walking, interacting with music, and art," says Lory Bright-Long, MD, CMD, of the American Medical Directors Association. "We have to awaken the senses so that the memory can have a hook. This is accomplished in the memory care setting."

It is important for those considering assisted living and nursing home facilities to inquire about specific memory care units if a loved one requires this environment. Start the search at APlaceForMom.com.



April is Parkinson's Awareness Month in the United States and Canada, an observance dedicated to raising consciousness of the disease and support for those affected by it. **Parkinson's is the fastest growing neurological disease, and currently affects more than 6 million people worldwide.**

Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative condition. It creates movement and coordination impairment that worsens as the disease progresses, making it difficult to control body movements over time. Parkinson's disease can manifest a range of symptoms, which can vary greatly from patient to patient. Initial symptoms often include an overall feeling of weakness and slight tremor, with tremors gradually progressing over time.

Some of the early symptoms of Parkinson's disease include the following:

| Motor Symptoms of Parkinson's

- Tremor of the hands or fingers
- Slowness of movement
- Stiffness or rigidity of muscles
- Difficulties with balance or posture

| Non-Motor Symptoms of Parkinson's

- Cognitive impairment
- Depression, anxiety or irritability
- Sleep disruption & fatigue
- Constipation



While the cause of Parkinson's disease is unknown and there is no testing available for definitive diagnosis, physical examination and consultation with a doctor can help make the diagnosis. Early diagnosis and intervention through medication, surgery or therapies can help manage Parkinson's disease symptoms and may slow the progression of the disease. For more information about Parkinson's disease, you can visit the Parkinson's Foundation website at www.parkinson.org

Superfoods *to the Rescue*

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|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Berries | 6. Nuts & Seeds |
| 2. Avocados | 7. Dark Leafy Green Vegetables |
| 3. Wild Salmon | 8. Turmeric |
| 4. Green Tea | 9. Broccoli |
| 5. Dark Chocolate | 10. Onions & Garlic |