

Life After Diagnosis AFDC Offers Help through the Whole Journey

When a loved one is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease it can seem like an insurmountable lifestyle change. At Alzheimer's Family Day Center (AFDC), we are here to help every step of the way and make this journey as easy as possible for both the caregivers and those who have been diagnosed. While our core service is the adult day health program, we are nevertheless committed to programs for those in the early stages of the disease to help individuals continue to enjoy life to its fullest.



Research has shown that those with Alzheimer's disease benefit from mental, physical and social stimulation. Such activity on a regular basis may help to slow the progression of the disease and allow the individual to function with some level of independence for a longer period of time. AFDC is proud of the successful programs offered for individuals recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

The Mind and Body Workshop is an evening program designed to help the individual with early dementia and a family member begin to adjust to their changing abilities and family relationships. The diagnosed individual, along with a spouse or other family member, attends a 2-hour weekly workshop that provides fun brain

exercises, engaging discussion and a time to meet with others experiencing



similar memory changes. Participants in the workshop also enjoy a light dinner and time for socialization.

Participation in the Mind and Body workshop provides benefits to caregivers and recently diagnosed individuals. It allows family caregivers to interact with others and find much needed support, as well as to begin to plan for future care. For the individual experiencing early memory changes, the workshop offers cognitive stimulation, and a time to meet and interact with others in a similar situation. The program has become so successful that we have expanded it to two sessions per week.



Alzheimer's Family Day Center also offers the Saturday Club, a social gathering for individuals who have recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related

dementia. Club members meet each Saturday from 9:30 am until 1:30 pm, and enjoy outings, group discussion, physical games and a lunch meal in a relaxed, non-judgmental setting. This provides an opportunity for a quality of life many thought impossible with Alzheimer's disease.

In addition, AFDC recently purchased the DAKIM Brain Fitness system through a very generous grant award from John and Glenys Dyer. This touch-screen computer system will be available to individuals involved in our various programs to stimulate brain function and to track progress over a period of time.

DAKIM offers fun brain games that enhance memory, language and critical thinking.

Our hope is that in maintaining brain fitness through the DAKIM system, the progression of memory loss in those who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease may be slowed. We are excited finally have the system up and running.



Our goal at AFDC is to provide a fun environment for people with Alzheimer's and their loved ones to continue to enjoy life after diagnosis. In this regard, we remain committed to serving individuals at every stage of Alzheimer's disease and to providing resources for caregivers and the community.

Alzheimer's Family Day Center (AFDC) is a not-for-profit organization that provides a wide range of services including: adult day health care, training for caregivers, support groups, and preventative activities. AFDC is the only dementia-specific adult day care center in Northern Virginia with programs for people in the later stages of Alzheimer's.

For information about AFDC's programs and services please contact:

Alzheimer's Family Day Center
2812 Old Lee Highway, Suite 210
Fairfax, VA 22031

Phone: **703-204-4664**

Fax: **703-204-0509**

Email: **afdc@alzheimersfdc.org**

Online: **www.alzheimersfdc.org**

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From Our Executive Director

Dear Family and Friends of AFDC,

Change is all around us.

In October 2009, Alzheimer's Family Day Center received a grant award from the Phillip Graham Foundation to make home improvements to our physical facility. Our goal was to provide a more home-like environment that would enhance the daily experience for our participants. In addition, our furniture was wearing out, and we needed some comfy new chairs and sturdier tables.

I hope you have noticed the AFDC now has a fresh new look! In mid-January, new flooring and carpeting was installed, as well as new countertops and cabinets for our center island. The facility was painted from top to bottom, and we now have new and improved handrails in our restrooms. We are in the process of purchasing new chairs and tables that will complete our renovation. For those with Alzheimer's disease, a warm and inviting environment can make all the difference in adjusting to the day center and actively participating in the daily programs.

You may also see that other changes are happening at AFDC. We are happy to welcome new staff members, Heather Lee (Activity Director), Linda Hadley (Events and Donor Relations), Holly Turner (Communications Coordinator) and Mariatu Kanu (Certified Nursing Assistant), who have all joined our team over the past several months.

If you have not had the chance, please stop by to see all the changes that are going on at Alzheimer's Family Day Center!

Sincerely,

Nancy Dezan
Executive Director

"I love the way my mom is treated at the center. She is so well cared for. I cannot say enough about all of the staff. I am so surprised at how much more interactive my mom is after attending. She has changed so much since attending the center. I can't express my gratitude for everyone who works there."

Welcome to AFDC!



Linda Hadley joins us as Director of Events and Donor Relations. She comes to us from the Alzheimer's Association where she was a very successful event planner for several years. She currently runs an Alzheimer's support group at Kensington Park Retirement Community in Kensington, MD and is creating a new support group with Arden Courts - Fair Oaks later this month.

Linda also has personal experience with Alzheimer's as a family caregiver. Both her mother and grandmother passed away from the disease and she currently cares for her aunt who was diagnosed in 2002.

Heather Lee is our new Activity Director. She comes to us with 16 years of activity experience working in long-term care facilities. Her passion and love is working with individuals with Alzheimer's and other related dementias. Heather lives in Alexandria with her husband and son.



Holly Turner joins us as Communication Coordinator. She recently graduated from Emerson College with a Master's degree in Global Marketing Communications and Advertising. She has a passion for communications and education and is overseeing a group of students from the University of Maryland to revamp the AFDC website. She looks forward to keeping you up to date on all the exciting new changes occurring at AFDC.

Mariatu Kanu is our new Personal Care Assistant. She is a Certified Nursing Assistant and enjoys group work with the participants. She grew up in Sierra Leone and has been in the United States for 9 years. Mariatu lives in Alexandria with her husband and two young sons.



Meet Our Interns



This spring, we are thrilled to have several interns working with us from the School of Social

Work at George Mason University and from Virginia Commonwealth University.

The interns are participating in our caregiver support groups, early stage programs and small groups within our adult day health center. AFDC is proud to be contributing to the bright future of long term care.



The Alzheimer's Family Day Center has partnered with GiveBackAmerica.org. When you shop online from one of hundreds of companies through this online charity mall, a part of the proceeds from your purchases will be donated to the Alzheimer's Family Day Center at no additional cost to you!

- Simply visit the website: www.GiveBackAmerica.org
- Click the "Charities" button on the red bar at the top
- Type in "Alzheimer's Family Day Center", hit enter, scroll down and click on "click here to support this cause"
- Start shopping!

For questions or more information contact AFDC at 703-204-4664 or afdc@alzheimersfdc.org.

Physical Therapy Study

At AFDC participants have the opportunity to get involved in some very interesting programs. Aside from the normal daily activities, several participants are now part of an in-house research study being conducted by Julie Ries PhD, and her team of Physical Therapy students from Marymount University. Their goal is to create a balance training program, based on the work they do with participants at AFDC, geared toward preventing falls in people who have Alzheimer's disease.



Throughout the study, participants will take part in group activities to train their muscles and improve balance. Participants will go through a series of sitting, standing, walking and balancing activities in a fun, social environment.

We are very fortunate to have Julie and her students here to provide this service for some of our participants. Those involved in the research study have already gone through pretesting and begun the program. For the participants who did not meet the qualifications, AFDC still offers physical therapy and has a physical therapist that comes to the day center t so that participants are getting sufficient exercise.

DAKIM Brain Fitness System Has Arrived

Research has proven again and again that mental exercise is an important part of retaining our cognitive abilities at their optimum levels. Although there are many brain fitness programs that have been designed to respond to these research findings, few have been developed to adjust to differing levels of cognitive abilities, including Alzheimer's disease and other cognitive impairments. The DAKIM Brain Fitness Program is somewhat unique in this regard, and it fits well into the programming at AFDC.



Thanks to a generous gift from John and Glenys Dyer, we have been able to purchase the DAKIM Brain Fitness System. Developed for seniors at all levels of cognitive abilities, this program is designed to give your brain a workout with games that are compelling and fun. Programming covers the six cognitive domains (long and short term memory, language, computation, visio-spatial orientation and critical thinking). There are different levels of challenge and each registered user's program can be updated daily to reflect their level of success in

each category. The program self-adjusts during the session so that questions are neither too difficult, nor too easy. The computer itself has a user friendly touch screen and step by step instructions. Individual sessions take 20 minutes, and it is recommended that the system be used several times a week.

We are excited to have this system and pleased to offer its use to our daily participants, our Mind and Body Workshop couples, Saturday Club participants, and members of the community. If you are interested in giving it a try you are welcome to call and set up an appointment for a trial run. We are experiencing a great response to this program, so reservations for use are necessary, and after a quick orientation session, the system will be set up for your use.

Please call Susan Stone at 703-204-4664 if you would like more information or have questions about this fantastic new opportunity AFDC can offer to our participants and the community.



AFDC Calendar of Events

Spring 2010

Caregiver Support Group

2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Newcomers are welcome!

Respite offered free of charge; please call to make arrangements: (703) 204-4664

Mind and Body Workshop

Early intervention for those recently diagnosed with cognitive impairment and their families.

Next session is scheduled to begin April 12, 2010.

\$150 per couple, limited to 14 participants per session.

Please call Sue Stone for details and to register: (703) 204-4664

Classes for Caregivers

Every 3rd Wednesday, 1:30-3:00, FREE

April 21— The Stages of Alzheimer's disease

May 19— Behavior as Communication

June 16— Activities for Those Who Have Memory Impairment

July 21— Keep 'Em Moving, Keep 'Em Safe!

Please Register for each session individually.

Respite care is available—please call to make arrangements: (703) 204-4664

Evening Activity Program

Last Friday of every month, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

The program consists of a light dinner, activities and assistance with personal care.

\$25 per evening, open only to participants in the day center and Fairfax County Adult Day Health programs

Contact Nancy Dezan or Marcy Hunter to register: (703) 204-4664

Fido 5K Wag and Walk

Saturday May 22, 2010

Burke Lake Park— 8:30am

5K fun run or 1 mile walk

Bring your family, friends and dogs!

Refreshments will be provided for runners, walkers and their families

All proceeds benefit the Alzheimer's Family Day Center

The Science of Alzheimer's

By Sana Imad, B.Med.Sci, PhD Candidate

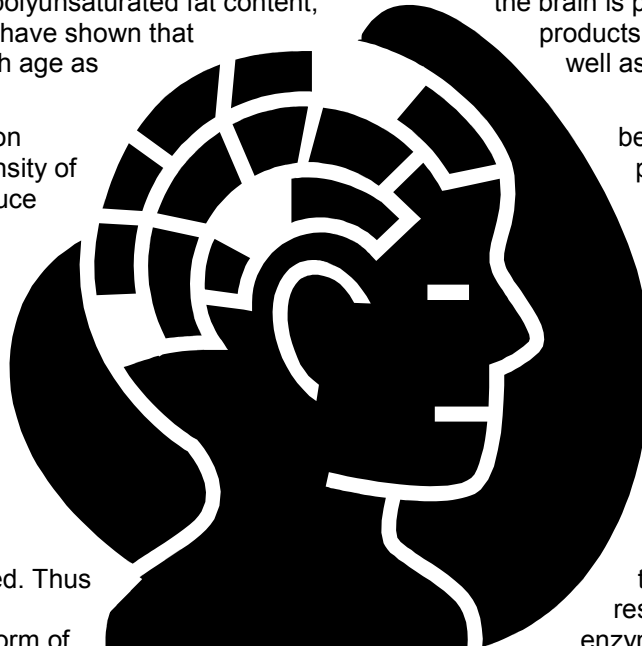
Alzheimer's disease (AD) is a neurodegenerative disorder characterized by the progressive decline in memory, language, cognition and motor functions. The hallmarks of AD include accumulation of plaques composed primarily of aggregates of amyloid beta protein and neurofibrillary tangles containing abnormal tau protein. The progression of the pathology in AD is complex thus the initiating molecular event(s) remain largely unknown. However, in recent years, growing amount of research suggests that oxidative stress is an important contributor to the etiology of AD.

Oxidative stress is a condition which results from an imbalance in the production of free radicals and/or decline of antioxidative defenses in brain cells. The concept was originally derived from the free radical theory of aging, which states that age related accumulation of free radicals results in damage to all the major cellular components. Free radicals are highly reactive chemical species capable of initiating and propagating oxidative damage. As a result of its high polyunsaturated fat content, the brain is particularly vulnerable to oxidative stress. Several studies have shown that products of oxidative damage have been shown to increase with age as well as in the presence of plaques and tangles.

There is a correlation between oxidative stress and the density of plaques. It is postulated that plaques induce degeneration of cells within the brain. The influence of not only amyloid beta and tau protein within the tangles is the influence of not only various products of oxidative stress it is becoming overproduction of free radicals by amyloid beta and tau the key mechanisms stress underlying the

Antioxidants block neutralizing free radicals. In themselves become oxidized. Thus replenish our antioxidant resources. Antioxidants present themselves in the form of enzymes, vitamins, minerals and each day there appear to be many other nutrients and compounds exhibiting antioxidative properties. Antioxidants work by either stabilizing the unstable product thus breaking the chain reaction which continuously produces free radicals or by preventing the oxidation by reducing the rate of chain initiation. Such antioxidants are typically enzymes which can stop an oxidation chain from ever setting in motion.

Antioxidants from our diet appear to be of great importance in controlling damage by free radicals, however, it remains unclear as to how beneficial they are when taken in the form of supplements. There is little doubt that antioxidants are a necessary component for good health and should therefore be included in the daily diet as part of a healthy eating plan for healthy aging. Vitamins A, C and E as well as selenium and lycopene are some of the antioxidants we should include in our daily diet in the form of dark vegetable, nuts, fish, vegetable oil, berries, soybeans, wheat, oatmeal and citrus fruits just to name a few. Given the growing amount of evidence implicating oxidative stress in Alzheimer's disease one of the ways in which we can try and prevent oxidative stress from accelerating the rate at which our bodies and brain age is by ensuring we have diet rich in natural antioxidants.

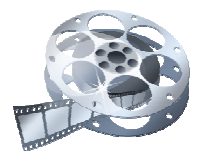


between areas with elevated plaque deposits. It is increasingly clear that the radicals, stimulated in part are believed to be one of contributing to the oxidative progression of AD.

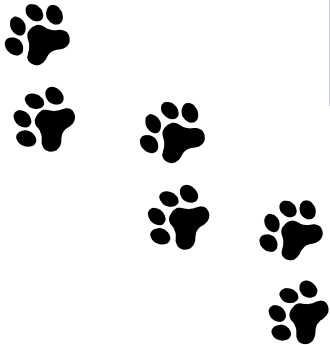
the process of oxidation by doing so, the antioxidants there is a constant need to resources. Antioxidants can enzymes, vitamins, minerals and

AFDC: The Reel Story

This spring, graduate students from American University will be doing a multi-media project on Alzheimer's disease, with a focus on Alzheimer's Family Day Center. The students have already filmed activities in the day center, and have interviewed staff and a family caregiver. The completed project will include a documentary providing a window into the world of Alzheimer's disease, with the goal of furthering understanding of the disease, and hopefully dispelling some of the misguided myths and stereotypes.



ALZHEIMER'S FAMILY DAY CENTER'S FIDO 5K AND WAG AND WALK



**Burke Lake Park
Fairfax, Virginia**



Saturday, May 22, 2010
**Join us for a 5K Fun Run or a
5K or 1- mile Walk!**

**Bring your family! Bring your friends!
Bring your dog!**

**All proceeds benefit the
Alzheimer's Family Day Center**

"Sharing the Care, Spreading the Knowledge"



**For more information contact Linda Hadley at
linda.hadley@alzheimersfdc.org or 703-204-4664 ext.14**



2812 Old Lee Highway, Suite 210
Fairfax, VA 22031

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Your Donation Helps so Much and so Many

Your donations are used to keep our fees affordable by supporting the Family Caregiver Respite Fund for those who need financial assistance but cannot pay for services; activity programs/therapies; and training, education, and support groups for caregivers. Here are a few ways to donate:

***Contribution from your paycheck.** Your selection of AFDC (#8096) United Way/Combined Federal Campaign Program directly deducts your contribution from your paycheck.

***Circle of Friends Monthly Giving Program.** This program allows you to pledge a monthly gift, to be automatically deducted from your checking account via secure EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) on the 15th of each month.

***"In Lieu of Flowers"** When a loved one has died, you may request that donations in their honor be made to AFDC.

***Employer Match program.** Your company can double your donation! Ask your personnel office.

***Cash donations** mailed to AFDC, 2812 Old Lee Highway Suite 210, Fairfax, VA 22031.

OUR WISH LIST

- Bingo prizes
- i-Home
- Blankets
- Overhead projector
- Keurig coffee maker
- DVD movies
- 32" or larger flat screen TV
- Magazine subscriptions
- Digital Camera

