

ADVANCES IN HEALTH CARE

Help For Those Living With Alzheimer's Is Within Reach

(NAPSA)—Alzheimer's disease is the No. 1 fear of aging, according to a survey sponsored by Bankers Life and Casualty Company, a national life and health insurer specializing in the needs of seniors.

The disease destroys brain cells, causing problems with memory, thinking and behavior, and has no cure. However, treatment for its symptoms, when combined with the right support, can make a difference.

"We've seen the devastating impact that Alzheimer's can have on everyone involved," says Scott Perry, who serves on the board of directors of an Alzheimer's Association chapter. He's also president of Bankers Life and Casualty, which supports the Association with its annual nationwide "Forget Me Not Days" fundraiser and effort to increase awareness of the disease.

Living With Alzheimer's

In the early stages of the disease, there are many things Alzheimer's patients can do to help preserve their independence. They include:

- Enlisting the help of others to complete everyday tasks such as shopping, meal preparation and housecleaning
- Using memory aides such as labels describing the contents of drawers and step-by-step instructions for completing tasks
- Tracking time and important dates with the help of a calendar
- Using an answering machine to keep a record of phone messages
- Posting important phone numbers in large print next to the phone
- Talking to family members about preferences for the future.



Research shows that even when faced with a debilitating health condition, the primary preference of elder adults is to still live on their own.

Providing Support

Many organizations offer assistance to Alzheimer's patients, their families and caregivers. Support provided by the Alzheimer's Association includes a toll-free help line at (800) 272-3900 (available 24/7) and a Web site at www.alz.org, which provides extensive information and online communities for those living with the disease. The Association recently made site enhancements to enable caregivers to search and screen senior housing options throughout the U.S. and to get detailed information on a variety of issues surrounding care options.

Additionally, the Association offers a Medic Alert® + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return® program that works to reunite Alzheimer's patients who wander and become lost with their caregivers.

Learn More

For more information useful to older Americans, visit www.bankers.com and click on "Senior Resources."