

# PROVIDER UPDATE

June 2023

## Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. Alzheimer's disease is a progressive form of dementia that affects nearly 6.5 million people in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> It involves parts of the brain that control thought, memory, and language and begins with mild memory loss that can lead to losing the ability to carry on a conversation and respond to the environment. Memory problems are one of the first warning signs of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and people with the disease can eventually lose the ability to carry on a conversation and respond to the environment.



More evidence is emerging that healthy behaviors can lower the risk for Alzheimer's. As a trusted medical provider, you can encourage your patients to adopt these behaviors to improve their health and possibly reduce their chances of developing Alzheimer's. Preventive, healthy lifestyle choices include:

- Preventing and managing high blood pressure
- Managing blood sugar, for diabetic patients
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Keeping physically active
- Quit smoking and avoid excessive drinking
- Prevent and correct hearing loss
- Getting enough sleep

While adopting all of these behaviors at once may seem overwhelming to your patients, encourage them to make them gradually. Step by step, they can make a big difference to their cognitive health.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/publications/features/reducing-risk-of-alzheimers-disease/>

<sup>1</sup> Alzheimer's Association. 2022 Alzheimer's Facts and Figures. <https://alz-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/alz.12638>.

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Coding Tips – Dementia

Dementia is an overall term for diseases and conditions characterized by a decline in memory, language, problem-solving and other thinking skills that affect a person's ability to perform everyday activities.

**Important Coding Information**

When documenting dementia, include the following:

- Underlying condition
- Type of dementia (senile, vascular, etc.)
- Presence of behavioral disturbances (delirium, delusions, depression, aggressive or violent behavior)

**Etiology**

- When coding Dementia, if the etiology of the condition is known, it is important to code both the underlying condition as well as Dementia. Examples of etiology codes are, but not limited to:

F10.27, F10.97	Alcoholic dementia
G10	Huntington’s disease
G20	Parkinson’s disease
G30.0-G30.9	Alzheimer’s disease
G31.01	Pick’s disease
G31.09	Frontotemporal dementia
G31.83	Lewy body disease (Parkinsonism)
G31.89	Other specified degenerative diseases of nervous system
G35	Multiple Sclerosis

- When the etiology is unknown, the following codes should be used:

F03.90	Unspecified dementia, unspecified severity, without behavioral disturbance, psychotic disturbance, mood disturbance, and anxiety
F03.911	Unspecified dementia, unspecified severity, with agitation
F03.918	Unspecified dementia, unspecified severity, with other behavioral disturbance
F03.92	Unspecified dementia, unspecified severity, with psychotic disturbance
F03.93	Unspecified dementia, unspecified severity, with mood disturbance
F03.94	Unspecified dementia, unspecified severity, with anxiety

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**Medication Adherence is important for your patients**

Here are a few tips to encourage medication adherence:

- Assess patient's health literacy
- Explain why the medication is needed
- Provide written instructions with their personal schedule in mind
- Discuss common side effects
- Schedule follow-up appointments

**Provider Service Center Holiday Observance**

We will be closed Tuesday, July 4 in observance of the Independence Day holiday. Please let us know if you have any questions.

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