

# After a Diagnosis

Once you have a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, your doctor should:



## Meet with you and your family (or friend).

ASK:

- *Why should my family be there?*

## Explain the diagnosis.

ASK:

- *What is my diagnosis?*
- *What can I expect in the near future and over time from the disease?*
- *What can I expect from you (the doctor)?*
- *What common risks do I need to know?*

## Tell you about treatment options so, together, you can select what is best for you within your care plan.

ASK:

- *What treatments are available that don't involve medications?*
- *What medications are available for me?*
- *What are their risks and benefits?*
- *What are the side effects?*
- *What is my care plan?*
- *Where can I find my care plan?*

## Help you identify care partners.

ASK:

- *Should I have a particular care partner?*
- *What should my care partner learn that will be helpful to us both?*

## Tell you where to find more information about your diagnosis and services in the clinic and in your community.

ASK:

- *Who/where can I call when I have questions?*
- *What kinds of services are available to me?*  
*Can I use a care coordinator or a similar professional at the place I get my medical care?*
- *Is a care consultation service available in my community?*

## Schedule your next visit and tell you how often they want to see you.

ASK:

- *What will happen at the next visit?*
- *What should I focus on before then?*



## What else should you do? Some next steps to consider include:

### Identify your support team.

Your team can include a spouse, friends, partner, adult children, neighbors, faith group members, or anyone in your life who can help meet your needs. Together, you should:

- **Learn all you can.** Learn about the disease, how it may affect your life, and who can help. Educate others in your family.
- **Organize a family meeting.** Talk about the diagnosis and next steps.
- **Ask for help.** Share the diagnosis with others so they understand what you're going through. Let family and friends know how they can help and support you.
- **Take care of you.** Schedule regular medical check-ups. Eat right. Get regular exercise. Have a healthy schedule for sleep and activity. Stay in close contact with family and friends. Do the things you enjoy!
- **Plan ahead.** Make legal, financial, health care wishes, and other life plans and decisions. Two resources are:
  - » Honoring Choices ([www.honoringchoices.org](http://www.honoringchoices.org))
  - » Health Care Directive ([www.extension.umn.edu/family/live-healthy/live-well/healthy-futures/health-care-directive/](http://www.extension.umn.edu/family/live-healthy/live-well/healthy-futures/health-care-directive/))

### Connect with community supports.

Use local resources to stay as healthy and independent as possible, including:

#### Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter

Information Line: 800-272-3900

Website: [www.alz.org/mnnd](http://www.alz.org/mnnd)

A helpful expert can help you locate and arrange for a wide variety of resources and support services, including care consultation, support groups, driving resources, home safety resources, research studies, educational booklets, classes, and many others. Two practical health and wellness resources are:

- » Living Well Workbook ([www.actonalz.org/pdf/Living-Well.pdf](http://www.actonalz.org/pdf/Living-Well.pdf))
- » Taking Action Workbook ([www.actonalz.org/pdf/Taking-Action.pdf](http://www.actonalz.org/pdf/Taking-Action.pdf))

#### Senior Linkage Line®

Information Line: 800-333-2433

Website: [www.MinnesotaHelp.info](http://www.MinnesotaHelp.info)®

Click on "Find", fill in Dementia or Memory Care, add "Where" you are seeking services.

A helpful expert can provide information and help you connect with many support services, including indoor and outdoor chore programs, home-delivered meals, transportation, assistance with paying for prescription drugs, care coordination, support groups, community activities, and many others.

