

CHARTING A PATH: ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES FOLLOWING A DEMENTIA DIAGNOSIS

Alvin Chang MD

Internal Medicine/Geriatric Medicine

New Foundation Medical Group

COMMON TYPES OF DEMENTIA

- ◉ Alzheimers
- ◉ Vascular
- ◉ Lewy Body dementia (Parkinson's)
- ◉ Frontotemporal dementia
- ◉ Alcohol induced dementia

DEMENTIA DX ESTABLISHED

Prognosis: see FAST Stages

Treatment options: to slow down the disease progression.

Start building a care/support team

Advance Directives

DEMENTIA TREATMENT OPTIONS

Medication: acetylcholinesterase inhibitor + memantine.

Brain stimulation activities to stimulate dendrite growth.

Psychological evaluation and treatment of underlying depression.

Treatment of other medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and hypertension.
Correct vision and hearing.

CARE SUPPORT TEAM

Division of Labor is key to provide good care for dementia patient!

Primary care physician with geriatric medicine background

Psychiatrist/psychologist

Pharmacist consultant

Home health agency: good nurse, physical therapist, speech therapist, social worker, dietician

Local senior center/ Alzheimer of Orange County for resources.

Private caregiver

Assisted living for respite care

Adult Day Care Center

PROGRESSION OF DEMENTIA

Home/Independent living: patient is mild to moderate stages of dementia.

Primary caregiver is spouse/family members.
May have private caregivers.

Patient can still go to doctors office and go out with escort. Cannot be left alone at home.

May benefit from home health and Adult Day Care program.

PROGRESSION OF DEMENTIA

Assisted living/memory care/board and care
Patient is in moderate to severe stages.

Bowel and bladder incontinence

Behavioral problems/wandering

Difficulty walking/falls

Frequent infections such as UTI/pneumonia

Difficulty swallowing/eating

Needs 24/7 care

ADVANCE DIRECTIVE VERY IMPORTANT!!

PROGRESSION OF DEMENTIA

Nursing home/Board and Care

Endstage dementia.

Patient often bedbound and often with feeding tube and urine catheters.

Patients may have pressure ulcers on buttocks/heels.

Consider hospice care