

Press Release



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THE ALLIANCE FOR AGING RESEARCH UNVEILS NEW RESOURCE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS OF ALZHEIMER'S PATIENTS

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

Washington, DC -- The Alliance for Aging Research has partnered with the National Family Caregivers Association to develop a new resource to educate family caregivers on how to care for themselves while caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's. The resource kit is funded by a grant from MetLife Foundation and includes a leader's guide and DVD to assist community groups in hosting workshops for family caregivers.

"We are pleased to support this program which provides important tools that focus on meeting the needs of caregivers, who often find themselves overwhelmed by the demands of caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease," said Sibyl Jacobson, President, MetLife Foundation.

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder that gradually destroys a person's memory and ability to learn, reason, make judgments, communicate and carry out daily activities. As Alzheimer's progresses, individuals may experience changes in personality and behavior. In the late stages of the disease, individuals need help with basic functions such as dressing, personal hygiene and eating. Alzheimer's disease advances at widely different rates and the length of the illness may vary from three to 20 years. According to the Alzheimer's Association, one in 10 people over age 65 and nearly half of those over age 85 have the disease.

"Age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's disease, and as the baby boom generation ages the number of Americans with Alzheimer's will soar," said Daniel Perry, executive director of the Alliance. "The vast majority of Alzheimer's patients are cared for at home by family members, and it is very important that we provide family caregivers with tools and resources to cope with this disease."

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Currently there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease. However, treatments are available that help improve the quality of life for someone with Alzheimer's. One important treatment is supportive care that helps individuals and their families come to terms with the diagnosis, obtain information and advice about treatment options, and maximize quality of life through the course of the illness.

The video features three generations of one family coping with the care of a loved one who suffers from the disease. Caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease can bring physical and emotional demands that are exhausting. The video looks at the causes, signs and health implications of family caregiver stress, and suggests ways for caregivers to care for themselves.

To order a copy of the toolkit, "Alzheimer's Disease: Helping Yourself Help a Loved One," contact the Alliance for Aging Research at 202-293-2856.

To learn more about the burden of chronic disease and the promise of innovation, access the Alliance's new online almanac, *The Silver Book*, at www.silverbook.org.

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 by MetLife to carry on its long-standing tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation has been involved in a variety of aging-related initiatives addressing issues of caregiving, intergenerational activities, mental fitness and civic engagement. Since 1986, the Foundation has supported research on Alzheimer's disease through its Awards for Medical Research program and has contributed more than \$10 million to efforts to find a cure. More information about the Foundation is available at www.metlife.org

Founded in 1986, the Alliance for Aging Research is a nonprofit, independent organization dedicated to improving the health and independence of aging Americans through public and private funding of medical research and geriatric education. The Alliance combines the interests of top scientists, public officials, business executives and foundation leaders to promote a greater national investment in research and new technologies that will prepare our nation for the coming senior boom, and improve the quality of life for today's older generation. More information about the Alliance is available at www.agingresearch.org

Founded in 1993, The National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA) is a grassroots organization created to educate, support, empower, and speak up for the more than 50 million Americans who care for a loved one with a chronic illness or disability. NFCA reach across the boundaries of different diagnoses, relationships and life stages to address the common needs and concerns of all family caregivers. For more information visit www.nfcacares.org

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