

## Fact Sheet

- The Charles F. and Joanne Knight Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (**Knight ADRC**) is part of the Department of Neurology at Washington University School of Medicine. Dr. John C. Morris directs the Knight ADRC.
- Dementia is the loss of memory and thinking abilities that impairs a person's ability to carry out daily activities. Alzheimer's disease (AD), a brain disorder, is the most common cause of dementia.
- Two classes of drugs are currently approved to treat the symptoms of AD. The exact cause of AD is not known and there is no cure yet for AD. However, because getting older is the greatest risk factor for AD, our rapidly aging population means that AD will be a public health problem of epidemic proportions unless cures are developed.
- The **Knight ADRC** has 3 comprehensive research programs funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH) that look at ways to prevent Alzheimer's disease:
  - Memory and Aging Project (MAP) - Studies healthy older adults to predict development of AD and evaluate dementia symptoms.
  - Adult Children Study (ACS) - Studies middle-age persons with a family history of AD to see when the first indicators of AD may occur.
  - Dominantly Inherited Alzheimer's Network (DIAN) - Studies unusual cases where families have a dominantly inherited form of AD.
- The **Knight ADRC** has developed two tools for diagnosing AD that are used all over the world:
  - The Clinical Dementia Rating (CDR) - Used by medical professionals to determine the difference between normal aging and AD and to tell how severe the disease is if present.
  - The Ascertain Dementia 8 (AD8) - An 8 item dementia screening tool that takes less than 3 minutes to complete. It detects early cognitive changes associated with dementia.
- The **Knight ADRC** is a leader of the worldwide effort to uncover the cause and cure of Alzheimer's disease:
  - A team of neurologists, psychiatrists, geriatricians, psychologists, clinical nurse specialists, and social workers work together to do gold standard assessments of cognitive function in aging and dementia.
  - The **Knight ADRC** would not exist without our very important **VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANTS** (~800 individuals in our active cohort). If you are interested in participation, please give us a call at **314-286-2683** or visit our website at <http://alzheimer.wustl.edu>
- The **Knight ADRC** promotes diversity and pursues community outreach activities by:
  - Training and financing physicians, and other health care providers at Washington University & beyond.
  - Providing educational programs reaching out to African American and rural communities.
  - Creating and maintaining the African American Advisory Board (AAAB) to advise the ADRC on cultural sensitivity and appropriate strategies to encourage long term participation in research studies.