



OASIS

Adult Day Program

Quarterly Newsletter

WHO WE ARE

We are an innovative day program for individuals in early to mid stages of Alzheimer's disease and/or other related dementias

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A program of

valley
CAREGIVER
RESOURCE CENTER

UTI Awareness As We Age

By Meghan Velasquez
Program Manager

When we hear urinary tract infection, our first thought is typically burning or discomfort when urinating. Still, we may not know that UTIs can affect older adults differently, especially those with dementia.

Instead, they may experience more behavioral symptoms, such as sudden and increased confusion.

So, what is a urinary tract infection? A UTI is when bacteria enters the urethra, and your immune system can't fight them off. They then spread to your bladder and kidney, resulting in a UTI.

Our risk of UTIs increases with age, and although they are more common in women, men also experience them more as they age.

Common symptoms of UTIs include:

- Burning when urinating
- Pelvic pain
- Frequent urination
- An urgent need to urinate
- Fever
- Chills
- Strong urine odor

When your loved one is diagnosed with Alzheimer's or dementia, they may be unable to communicate these symptoms to you. Any increase in confusion may be overlooked due to their diagnosis, so some other signs to look for include:

- Incontinence
- Onset or increased agitation
- Lethargy
- Loss of balance or falls
- Decreased mobility
- Decreased appetite

More severe symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Flushed skin
- Back pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting

Certain factors may increase the risk of UTIs in older adults, such as Parkinson's, diabetes, and, as we mentioned, Alzheimer's disease and other related forms of dementia. Also, wearing briefs can increase your chances of UTI if they are not changed regularly.



Diagnosing a UTI can be challenging due to the communication factor and behavioral changes familiar with memory loss. But if you suspect a UTI, a urinalysis will most likely be ordered. There are also home UTI tests that check urine for infection. Still, because bacteria are often found in the urine of older adults, these tests are not always the most accurate way to confirm your suspicion. If you receive a positive home test, follow up with your doctor.

Antibiotics are the most common form of treatment. They are only sometimes necessary, depending on the severity level. However, always consult your doctor before trying anything over-the-counter to ensure it doesn't conflict with your loved one's current medication routine.

Although preventing ALL UTIs is impossible, there is plenty we can do to lessen our chances of getting them or their frequency.

You can do this by:

- Staying hydrated
- Changing briefs frequently
- Lessening caffeine and alcohol intake
- Keeping the genital area clean
- Not holding or waiting when the urge to urinate occurs

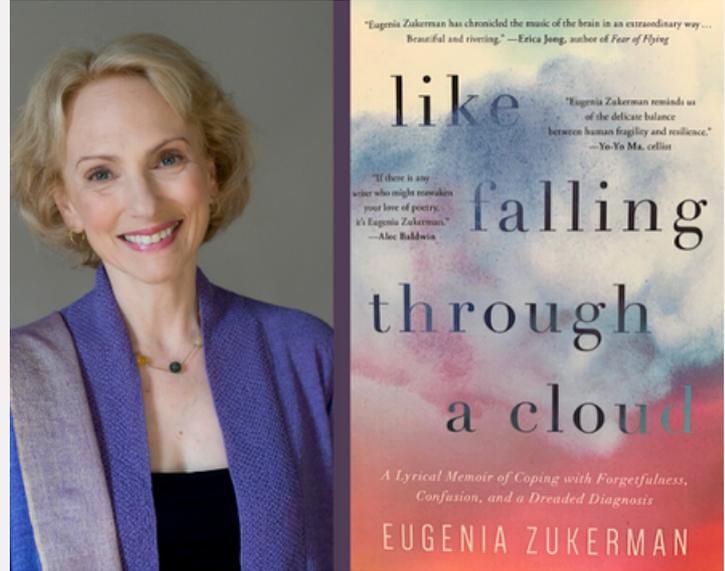
Although it may be difficult, catching your aging loved one's UTI early is vital to avoid the infection spreading to their kidneys. If you see a sudden increase in confusion, don't assume it is a progression with their diagnosis; get them tested so you can start treatment immediately. Do your best to take preventative steps; if all else fails, get them tested by their doctor.

Book Review: *like falling through a cloud*

By Lynne Rayner

This book's sub-title "A Lyrical Memoir of Coping with Forgetfulness, Confusion, and a Dreaded Diagnosis" is a brave attempt to prepare the reader for what is in the book, but it fails to prepare the reader for the depth of the content and the erudite talent of the author, and perhaps that is as it should be. This talent belongs to 79-year-old Eugenia Zukerman whose amazing past story includes, among other things, writing fiction and non-fiction, book reviews, plays, and articles all while being internationally renowned as a flutist.

This part of her life story begins when she realizes words
 "taunt me
 "tease me
 "test me"



and when she fails to find them, she knows "they're hiding" (5). Worse, she knows others are also aware of her lapses and struggles to say what she is thinking. From denial that anything could be seriously wrong to a devastating diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, she takes the reader through her journey from taking the diagnostic tests to discussing the results, and trying to find ways to manage the disease.

To tell her story she relies on her love of music, her often dark sense of humor, and her ability to graphically place her words on the page to illustrate or emphasize her meaning. Although she is unsure why she finds herself now doing it, she uses mostly poetic language to sketch in her meaning, often coupling that with the graphics.

But it is her honest and illuminating insight into the fear of how her life is changing and will continue to change as the disease progresses that make this such a good read. She makes you her partner in the journey. You can identify with her when she can't locate her purse as she writes, "Breathe. It's just your wallet. **All your credit cards and 200 bucks!**" (82) or when she must fulfill one of her more public duties as Artistic Director of a local group and realizes unless she reads her notes she will not remember who the people are she is introducing and the parts they play (142). You sense her anxiety as she thinks about her family and whether she will be able to manage a house in upstate New York and her apartment in New York City. Her determination to live life as fully as possible under these new circumstances will be a light to all who struggle with a ravaging and unforgiving disease.

like falling through a cloud by Eugenia Zukerman was published by East End Press in 2019.
 (ISBN 978-1-7324912-2-9)

Upcoming Events

- **Father's Day Social**
 Friday, June 15th
 9am-10am
- **Day Program Closure**
 Monday, June 19th
- **Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Group**
 1st Monday and 3rd Wednesday of every month
 10am-11:30am

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Meghan Velasquez
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Staff Spotlight- Dolores Gonzalez

By Lynne Rayner



Dolores Gonzalez, a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA), came to the OASIS program with thirty years of experience in home health, assisted living facilities, and hospice care, and all of the qualities that are required in those service areas. More traditional working hours and getting holidays off led her to VCRC and OASIS, which gave her more time to enjoy her five grandchildren, thanks to taking the time to raise and care for three daughters with her husband Noel. Of course, she also makes time for cuddling with their little Frenchie, “Lil Girl”, and taking some early morning walks.

During some of her time off she took an amazing trip in a motor home with some of her girlfriends from school. They went to the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota and then headed on to Yellowstone, Zion National Park, and Mount Rushmore, but her favorite place is the Crazy Horse Memorial in the Black Hills because of its history and the massiveness of the memorial itself. She also hopes that the university planned for there will eventually become a reality.

As inspiring as those places are, however, Dolores says it is her brother who has always been there for her and motivated her to believe in herself. As a single parent, finances sometimes became stretched, and it was her brother who encouraged her and made sure the children had necessities like shoes for school.

Her advice is to stay focused, something she does whether it is in her personal life or when she thinks about the future of OASIS, a program Dolores would like to see working in a bigger site with an increase in the number of staff in order to reach more families, especially the caregivers. It would certainly be the place for Dolores, a person who enjoys the people she meets, and who deeply involves herself with helping them.

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 27, 2023 | CLOVIS VETERANS HALL - 6:30PM | TICKETS: \$150 PER PERSON
DINNER / SILENT & LIVE AUCTION

UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN



FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Contact Michelle DiBuduo at:
(559) 224-9154 or mdibuduo@valleycrc.org

As a non-profit, Valley Caregiver Resource Center has served in a nine-county region in the Central Valley area for over 35 years. Through these years, we continue to support a community that dedicates their lives to caring for a loved one, and the number of those in need of our services continues to grow.

By 2030, 10.8 million Californians will be older adults, making up one-quarter of the entire state’s population. As we prepare for the second half of life and the aging challenges, we must continue to create a community where people can be cared for, engaged, and valued. It takes all of us working together to make a meaningful difference.

This year more than ever, we need your Sponsorship for the biggest event of our fundraising year. Your gift allows us to continue supporting our programs: The Caregiver Resource Program, OASIS Adult Day Program, Health Insurance and Counseling Program (HICAP), and the Fresno-Madera Ombudsman Program.

You can make a valuable difference for those who need care and those who provide care by reserving your Sponsorship now for our annual fundraising event so that we may continue our programs and services!

We are hosting our 27th Annual Celebration of Care fundraiser on Friday, October 27, 2023. We ask you to come and experience our theme of “Under the Tuscan Sun” at the Clovis Veterans Hall, where we will celebrate the heart of Italy with its silvery olive groves and warm sun that shines on fields of sunflowers. This luscious event will transport you to the hills of Tuscany, where you will enjoy delectable appetizers, a delicious dinner, and wines – plus our live and silent auctions. The entire evening is designed to benefit the programs of Valley Caregiver Resource Center.

