

Philadelphia

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ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

More than 5 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's, a disease that slowly robs one of their memory and alters behavior, and almost half of all people over age 85 will develop the disease in their lifetime. "Early diagnosis is important because the sooner you start medication, the better chance you have of delaying the progression," says Steven Arnold, MD, a neurologist and geriatric psychiatrist and associate director the University of Pennsylvania's Alzheimer's Disease Center. "Over the last 20 years, there have been amazing advances in research and there are now medicines in late-phase clinical trials that may be able to clear the brain of the disease or prevent it from forming."

Top Hospitals: Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania - UPHS

Given that Pennsylvania is second only to Florida in the size of its geriatric population, it's not surprising that many hospitals are carving out centers to help them cope with the myriad of problems that come with aging. The breadth and magnitude of senior services at **UPHS** earned it 21st place in the nation for geriatrics in the most recent *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. **The Ralston Penn Center** is a beehive of clinical activity, with board-certified geriatric physicians, nurse practitioners and social workers delivering primary care in the full spectrum of problems to which the elderly are especially prone — arthritis, balance, depression, diabetes, hypertension, memory loss, osteoporosis and urinary issues. The **Truman Schnabel House Calls** program takes the exceptional care into the living rooms of housebound patients. The **Acute Care for Elders (ACE)** unit at Penn Presbyterian, one of the first in this rapidly growing concept, is a home-like, specially designed and equipped mini-hospital where older adults receive care tailored to their medical problems and special needs. Particular attention is paid to the physical and psychological deterioration that often accompanies hospitalization. The **Penn Memory Center**, spanning diagnosis, treatment, basic research and clinical trials, is the only Alzheimer's disease center in Philadelphia that's supported by the National Institute on Aging. This is an excellent resource for the evaluation of a loved one showing signs of memory loss, confusion, personality change or early dementia. The **Sleep Disorders Clinic** for Seniors treats medical conditions that interfere with a good night's rest — and **Penn is so in the forefront in research that it wouldn't be surprising if a cure for Alzheimer's or a breakthrough understanding of what causes the deterioration of brain cells in Parkinson's disease came from these labs.**