



Alzheimer's disease is a public health problem affecting approximately five million Americans and their families. The prevalence of disease increases with age and it is estimated that by the year 2040, the number of diagnosed persons will reach 12-14 million

As you know, a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease can leave the patient and family frightened, depressed, angry and in need of support. Often it is assumed that a person diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease cannot discuss the illness and how they feel about it. This assumption causes the person to be isolated and leaves little opportunity for them to talk about the illness, the changes they and their family members are going through, and how they are dealing with it.

For the past six years we have offered two sets of five-week support group sessions each year for early stage patients and their families providing them with the opportunity to talk with other patients and caregivers, to search for ways to compensate for failing memory and communication, to learn more about current research and medications and to plan for legal and financial matters. We will be offering a special format that enables this particular population of patients and their loved ones to come together and share support and information. We will invite guest speakers to share their expertise on issues of concern and we will also spend time in two smaller groups to allow for separate support/discussion time for the caregivers and the patients.

Our first meeting is Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup>. from 9:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The two-hour meetings will continue through November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The meetings will take place at Pleasant Valley Church of Christ, 10900 Rodney Parham Rd. Parking is available next to the building.

If you know of families you believe would profit from participation with this group please contact Priscilla Pittman, MSW, MA at Alzheimer's Arkansas Programs and Services by phone at 224-0021, fax 227-6303 or mail: 10411 W. Markham, Suite 130, Little Rock, AR 72205-1409. Those planning to attend will need to make reservations.

Priscilla Pittman, MSW, MA  
Program Coordinator