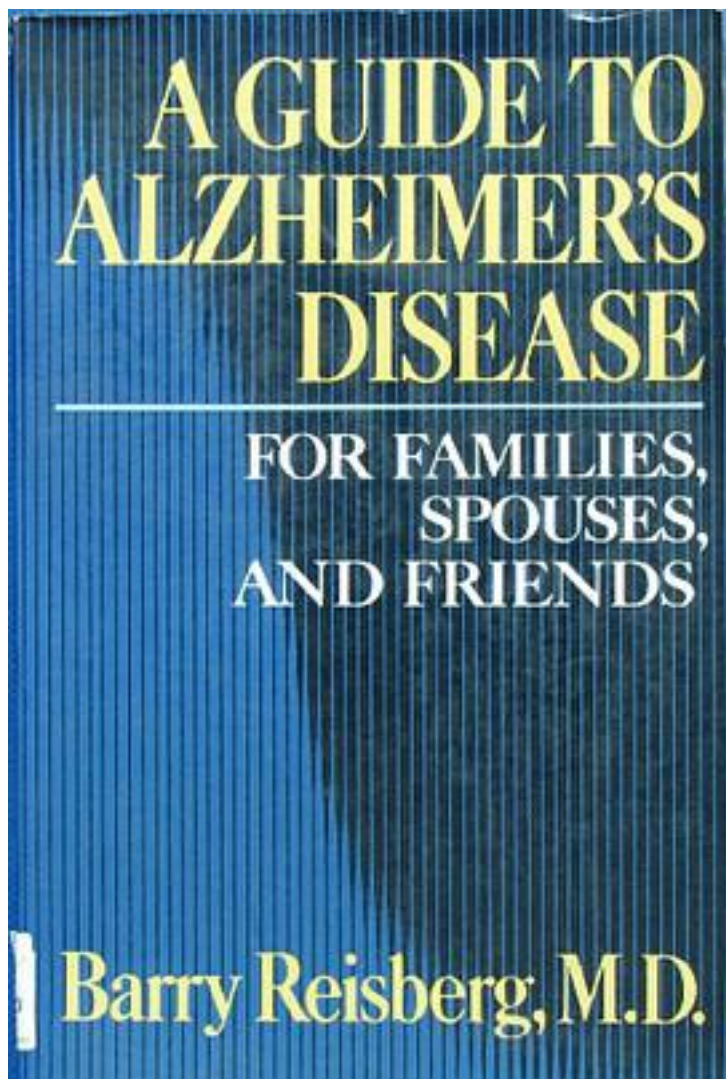


# Guide to Alzheimer's Disease



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Foreword  
by Robert N. Butler, M.D.  
Alzheimer's disease has long been mistaken for an inevitable downhill pattern in both physical and mental function. Nowhere is this more evident than in the treatment—or rather lack of treatment—of mental impairment in the elderly. It is currently estimated that between 500,000 and 1.5 million persons suffer from the more serious and irreversible forms of senile dementia. Approximately 50 percent of all nursing home residents have some degree of mental impairment with Alzheimer's disease being a major reason for admissions to nursing homes. Given that few trends are as evident or predictable as the aging of the American population, those responsible for scientific research and service delivery are facing a series of challenges. A key element in our preparation for the future and for large numbers of persons surviving into old age must be research aimed at increasing our knowledge of the causes and the biological and behavioral mechanisms at work in senile dementia. Such research would improve our ability to treat and control these devastating conditions which take their toll primarily in the elderly population and perhaps eventually to prevent these diseases altogether. The insidious onset and progressive development of conditions

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