

COVID vaccine advised for Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers

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All Alzheimer's disease patients and their family caregivers should be vaccinated against COVID-19, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America says.

"Getting vaccinated is one of the most important steps families affected by Alzheimer's disease can take to protect themselves and their loved ones," said Dr. J. Wesson Ashford, chair of the foundation's medical, scientific and memory screening advisory board.

"Individuals living with Alzheimer's disease are often older and at higher risk of developing serious complications from COVID-19, and [family caregivers](#) cannot provide proper care to their loved one if their own health is compromised," Ashford said in a foundation news release.

"COVID-19 has added enormous new hardships for families affected by Alzheimer's disease, but vaccination brings us another step closer to the end of this terrible pandemic," he noted.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously hurt families affected by Alzheimer's disease by preventing visits in long-term care settings, cutting off access to in-person therapeutic and respite care programs, and adding enormous stress to [family caregivers](#), the [advisory board](#) said.

"The development of the COVID-19 vaccination brings us closer to the end of this terrible, global pandemic, but only if people receive it. We urge all families affected by Alzheimer's [disease](#) to get vaccinated as soon as they are able to do so," the board recommended.

The older age of most Alzheimer's patients makes them especially vulnerable to complications from the virus.

Adults 65 and older make up just 16% of the U.S. population but account for 80% of the nation's COVID-19 deaths, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Getting a loved one vaccinated helps protect them from the COVID-19 virus as well as becoming seriously ill if they do contract it. Caregivers themselves should get the vaccination as further protection because contracting the virus will impact their health and ability to provide care," according to the board.

Moreover, mental and physical stress, which have both significantly increased during the pandemic, can also affect the body's immune system, the board pointed out in their recommendation.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [older adults and COVID-19](#).

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