



# Diagnosis: Why, not What

The “Why” of Diagnosis is Challenging

*“A Comprehensive (and Complicated) Diagnosis Often Makes Treatment Obvious.”*



A diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease dictates a course of treatments that do not work. But the label “Alzheimer’s” is for a set of symptoms and does not reflect root-causes of disease. Neurologists aptly answer “what” - “Alzheimer’s disease” in this case. Consider a 2nd medical opinion to answer the question “why.”

Without a different diagnosis, your treatment options are limited by insurance for a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s. Probe for potentially overlooked causes. Since neurologist look at the brain only, seek medical professionals that look beyond the brain and do so broadly and deeply to identify treatable root causes.

## Physical Exam

A recent NY Times article points out that for decades, scientific research has shown that annual physical exams are in many ways pointless or dangerous, because they can lead to unneeded procedures. The last few years have produced a steady stream of new evidence against the utility of popular tests.

A Canadian task force recommended giving up the standard head-to-toe annual physical based on studies showing it to be “nonspecific,” “inefficient” and “potentially harmful,” replacing it instead with a small number of periodic screening tests which depend in part on a patient’s risk factors for illness.



The physical exam major shortcoming is that it looks for symptoms rather than root causes of disease.

## Alzheimer’s Diagnosis Within the Standard of Care

WebMD provides a thorough breakdown of the current state of Alzheimer’s diagnosis. The testing is non-specific because the causes of the disease are not well understood, generally. Thus your doctor will inquire about your medical history, perform a standardized physical exam, and perform a psychological tested called the Mini Mental State Exam. (MMSE). The result of the MMSE determines if further testing will be performed, for

example MRI or other brain imaging studies. A failed MMSE along with evidence of brain deterioration through imaging usually leads to a patient receiving and AD diagnosis and standard treatments that are known not to work.



Alzheimer’s is actually a misdiagnosis because it is not based on causes, but rather symptoms only.