

Alzheimer Awareness Month targets ?The 72%?

Did you know that women represent 72 per cent of Canadians living with Alzheimer's disease? They could be your mothers, wives, sisters, grandmothers or friends ? even you.

The Alzheimer Society is kicking off Alzheimer Awareness Month with a nationwide campaign called The 72%. It aims to inform women in their 40's and older about the warning signs of Alzheimer's disease, brain health and how the Alzheimer Society can help. Why women? Women live longer than men and age is a significant risk factor. That's why there are more women living with Alzheimer's disease than men.

Yet the impact on women is twofold. They also account for 70 per cent of family caregivers², which takes a tremendous toll on these women who eventually provide round-the-clock care. The burden is especially high for women raising families and holding down jobs.

?With this campaign, we're making Alzheimer's disease a women's issue,? said Debbie Islam, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Simcoe County. ?Women lead busy, hectic lives, often paying the price with their own health and well-being. We're asking them to invest time in understanding the warning signs. Whether they're concerned about getting Alzheimer's, have just been diagnosed or are a caregiver, we want women to reach out to their local Alzheimer Society. We can support them throughout the disease.?

Take a moment to know the signs: Warning signs, often misunderstood or ignored, are critical. In absence of a cure, early diagnosis allows for treatment and support so people can live as well as possible and start planning for their future needs.

?Women traditionally monitor the health of their families so it's even more important they understand this disease to be able to recognize changes in those they care for,? adds Islam.

Starting January 6, the Alzheimer Society invites all Canadians, including women, to visit www.alzheimer.ca/the72percent to take a moment and learn the warning signs and share them with friends and families on Facebook and Twitter. They can also read the stories of others living with Alzheimer's disease and post their own experiences.

Visitors will also be able to download other helpful resources and find their local Alzheimer Society.