

## Living with Alzheimer's disease

Video	Audio
<b>Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.</b> <b>Neurology</b> <b>Mayo Clinic</b>	“Young-onset Alzheimer’s disease is when Alzheimer’s disease starts before the age 65. Typical Alzheimer’s disease is when it starts after age 65.”
Charlie Leonard	“And it would interfere with some little parts of her job, particularly toward the end of the day.”
Cindy Leonard	“Yeah, there was a fatigue factor, too.”
Charlie Leonard	“Yeah.”
<b>Cindy Leonard</b> <b>Patient</b>	“And my dad had memory issues. So, I had it on my radar about Alzheimer’s disease.”
Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.	“Young-onset Alzheimer’s disease is caused by the buildup of toxic proteins in the brain, which lead to the shrinkage of brain structures that are important for memory and other cognitive functions.”
Charlie Leonard	“It was probably about three years ago we saw Dr. Jonathan Graff-Radford.”
Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.	“So, it really impacts families significantly, and it’s important for them to get a diagnosis.”
Charlie Leonard	“He felt he recognized that is mild cognitive impairment.”
Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.	“Most commonly, young-onset Alzheimer’s disease presents with a memory problem that’s progressive over time.”
Charlie Leonard	“I think at that time, he asked Cindy to let her supervisor know about her situation.”
Cindy Leonard	“They upgraded our computers around that time and, wow, that got things a little more difficult for me.”
Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.	“These could include problems with planning, organizing or performing tasks at work.”
<b>Charlie Leonard</b> <b>Cindy’s Husband</b>	“Her supervisor observed just more difficulty, and then suggested she see her neurologist again and had a little, a

	little deeper diagnosis at that time - dementia. And, about three to four months later, another consult with Dr. Graff-Radford, he then used the term Alzheimer's disease in her diagnosis."
Cindy Leonard	"I think it hit him a little harder."
Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.	"She was able to continue to work in a job she loved in patient education for several years after her diagnosis."
Charlie Leonard	"We can live with this. It's not everything. It's just some particular things. The brain works really interestingly."
Cindy Leonard	"Yeah, it's true."
Charlie Leonard	"And Cindy still continues to do some things really well."
Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.	Mrs. Leonard is living with her husband, who is an outstanding care partner, and she remains very active in many ways. Before the pandemic started, she was exercising regularly at the gym because she knows that exercise is associated with slowing down cognitive decline, and she really engaged socially with her friends. She's no longer working, but she's actively engaged in research here at Mayo Clinic, and she comes every six months for her visits and has contributed a lot to the research community."
Cindy Leonard	"I'm just glad to move the science forward if I can."
Jonathan Graff-Radford, M.D.	"There is hope for people living with dementia and their families. Every day, scientists understand more and more about when the disease starts, how it progresses and what treatments are on the horizon."
Charlie Leonard	"Yeah, we've lost this and this and this, but we haven't lost this, and, actually, we've gained this. And we plan to live with this. And ask us questions. Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid to be around us. Because we're going to keep living."

