



Dr. Michael Mullan, scientific director of the Roskamp Institute, and one of the lead members of the team that discovered the first known genetic cause of Alzheimer's Disease that results in the build up of a toxic protein in the brain called beta-amyloid, told a crowd assembled at the Pines of Sarasota that there is hope on the horizon for people afflicted with Alzheimer's disease. A drug that the Institute has been testing could go into clinical trials in Sarasota as soon as this summer. Dr. Mullan said the research group would apply in April to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to test the medication in humans. In studies with mice, Roskamp researchers found the drug Nilvadipine also increases blood flow in the brain and reduces the levels of a protein widely believed to cause Alzheimer's.

Roskamp Evaluation:

The first step of the evaluation is to see a neurologist, who will rule out any medically treatable condition, or other neurological disorder that could be causing a decline in cognition. This is covered by Medicare, as a specialist. If nothing is found and further cognitive testing is warranted, the neurologist will order neuropsychological evaluation and neuroimaging. All of these tests are typically covered by Medicare.

FREE MEMORY SCREENING

Memory screening is often useful in identifying an individual who requires the full dementia work-up. Early detection is important, as current treatment works best when provided early and affords patients and their loved ones appropriate time to plan for future needs. Screening can also provide reassurance for those without serious memory changes. Roskamp Institute offers complimentary Memory Screens to adults ages 60 and older. To make an appointment, call 941-256-8018.

MEMORY CLINICS

The Roskamp Institute Memory Clinics offer comprehensive assessment including a thorough physical, neurological, and neuropsychological examination. Additional studies of brain imaging such as MRI, CT scan and/or PET scan, and a comprehensive laboratory blood work are also obtained. At the completion of the diagnostic evaluation, an interdisciplinary diagnostic meeting is conducted and a formal diagnosis is provided for each patient. A feedback session is then conducted with the patient and his/her family members. Treatment options, patient follow-up, long-term planning, patient and caregiver support, and community referral to relevant agencies are also provided.

INTERESTED? The Roskamp Institute is looking for people to participate in upcoming and ongoing clinical trials. For more information please call 941-256-8018.



Dr. Bruce Robinson is Chief of Geriatrics at Sarasota Memorial Hospital, Director of the Sarasota Memorial Hospital's Memory Clinic and the Medical Director of Pines. Dr. Robinson is recognized in the prestigious national edition of Best Doctors in America and was recently nominated by the Florida Health Care Association as National Medical Director of the year. He is also a clinical professor at USF and Florida State University. His most recent works is in practicing physician education and prevention for seniors. Dr. Robinson presented information on the difference between normal memory loss and disease, like Alzheimer's. Dr. Robinson also discussed the importance of early screening to detect memory loss problems.

FIRST, A DETAILED DIAGNOSIS

The initial examination is designed to be simple or complex, as the person's problem requires. Only those tests and referrals necessary for an accurate diagnosis are ordered. The geriatrician, neurologist, neuropsychologist, nurse practitioners and social workers come together as a team to review clinical information and recommend appropriate treatment.

A COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

Once the evaluation process is complete, a written report is provided to the patient, primary care doctor and caregivers. A clinic physician and staff will meet with each patient and family to review and explain all results. Time is taken to teach about the diagnosis and make specific recommendations about organizing care.

COVERAGE FOR SERVICES

Medicare and other insurance typically cover much of the costs of the medical evaluation and the tests. We accept Medicare and Medicaid assignments. It is always a good idea to verify coverage with your insurance provider in advance.