

## Press Release



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### **NEW TOOLS BOOST ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS** **Downloadable 'pocket' films help increase public** **understanding of a 21<sup>st</sup> century epidemic**

Washington, DC – With the aging of the population, experts warn that Alzheimer's disease will reach epidemic proportions by mid-century, creating massive and unsustainable burdens in terms of health care costs, overwhelmed families, and millions of lives tragically lost to a devastating disease.

If you've got questions about Alzheimer's, [A Quick Look at Alzheimer's](#), a series of four animated 'pocket' films, just might have the answers you're seeking. The short films, which run only two-three minutes each, are available for anyone at anytime, and are universally accessible—playable on iPods, cell phones, PDAs, laptops and DVD players. They are available for download from [www.aboutalz.org](http://www.aboutalz.org), [www.agingresearch.org](http://www.agingresearch.org), Google Video, YouTube or as a DVD.

The pocket films were written and directed by [David Shenk](#), author of the acclaimed book, *The Forgetting* and are narrated by Emmy- and Tony-award winning actor David Hyde Pierce. Designed to explain the essence of the disease and its public health implications in easy-to-understand terms, the films were developed by the [Alliance for Aging Research](#) through a grant from MetLife Foundation.

“We absolutely have to stop Alzheimer's. As a nation, as an economy, as a civilization—we have to end it,” said David Shenk. “These films will help increase understanding of the disease, which will reduce stigma, improve care, and help strengthen the public fight to conquer this disease.”

Topics covered in the films are: *What is Alzheimer's Disease?*, *An Urgent Epidemic*, *The Race to the Cure* and *A Message for Patients and their Families*. The films are designed to help individuals understand and explain the disease in layman's terms, including doctors, nurses, caregivers, social workers, scientists, and others. By utilizing the latest technology and social media tools, they can easily be viewed practically everywhere—at home, at work, or in a doctor's office.

“The looming threat of Alzheimer’s disease consuming the Baby Boomer generation urgently demands a national plan of action that involves government and the private sector,” said Daniel Perry, executive director of the Alliance for Aging Research. “We encourage everyone to view and share these films so that there is broad understanding of what is at stake.”

“We are committed to finding a cure for Alzheimer’s. These pocket films will increase awareness and understanding of Alzheimer’s, its impact and the importance of research,” said Sibyl Jacobson, President, MetLife Foundation.

To help spread the word about the importance of the pocket films, a number of organizations have agreed to help promote and distribute *A Quick Look at Alzheimer’s*. These include the American Association of Geriatric Psychiatrists, American Nurses Association, Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research and the Institute on Aging at the University of Pennsylvania, Gerontological Society of America, National Council on Aging, Older Women’s League, Research America!, RetireSafe, Society for Women’s Health Research and The Senior Center for Health and Security.

#### **About MetLife Foundation**

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 by MetLife to carry on its long-standing tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation has been involved in a variety of aging-related initiatives addressing issues of caregiving, intergenerational activities, mental fitness and civic engagement. Since 1986, the Foundation has supported research on Alzheimer’s disease through its Awards for Medical Research program and has contributed more than \$10 million to efforts to find a cure. More information about the Foundation is available at [www.metlife.org](http://www.metlife.org)

#### **About The Alliance for Aging Research**

Founded in 1986, the Alliance for Aging Research is a nonprofit, independent organization dedicated to improving the health and independence of aging Americans through public and private funding of medical research and geriatric education. The Alliance combines the interests of top scientists, public officials, business executives and foundation leaders to promote a greater national investment in research and new technologies that will prepare our nation for the coming senior boom, and improve the quality of life for today’s older generation. More information about the Alliance is available at [www.agingresearch.org](http://www.agingresearch.org)

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