

# ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH INITIATIVE

**The Pat Summitt Clinic**

# The University of Tennessee Medical Center Alzheimer's Research Initiative at The Pat Summitt Clinic

Since it first appeared in medical journals in 1906, the “peculiar disease” now commonly known as Alzheimer's disease, has become the 6th leading cause of death in the United States.

For more than 100 years scientists, researchers and physicians have studied the disease. While there have been advancements in the understanding of how Alzheimer's disease affects the brain, of the 10 leading causes of death it remains the only one that cannot be prevented, slowed or cured.

A 1970s study, published in the Archives of Neurology described Alzheimer's disease as a “major public health challenge,” and almost 50-years later, it is a growing epidemic impacting a growing, aging population across the nation and around the world.

A diagnosis of a disease with no cure and few treatment options, is devastating for the patient, their family and their community.

## HOPE LIES IN RESEARCH

All across the globe, physicians, scientists and philanthropists are working together to expand our understanding of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and developing the next generation of treatments and therapeutic approaches.

The Pat Summitt Clinic at The University of Tennessee Medical Center launched the Alzheimer's Research Initiative as a collaborative effort of physicians, researchers and scientists across the academic medical center campus to do its part in advancing the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

Legendary basketball coach and teamwork expert, Pat Summitt envisioned a place in East Tennessee where patients, families, caregivers and leading medical experts would work collaboratively to improve care and support, educate future physicians and clinicians, as well as conduct ground-breaking research in the field of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

5,000,000

More than 5 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease. By 2050, this number could rise as high as 16 million.

Every 66 seconds someone in the United States develops Alzheimer's disease.



**2,672** Number of Deaths in Tennessee From Alzheimer's Disease in 2014

**6th**

Leading cause of death in Tennessee

**6th**

Highest Alzheimer's death rate in America

**161%**

Increase in Alzheimer's death since 2000

**Since 2000,**

deaths from Alzheimer's disease have increased in the US by

**↑ 89%**

while deaths from heart disease have decreased by

**↓ 14%**



Inspired by Coach Summitt's vision and with the support of The Pat Summitt Foundation, The Pat Summitt Clinic opened its doors in January of 2017. Today the clinic, the first and only of its kind in the region, serves approximately 3,500 patients in East Tennessee. That number is expected to increase to approximately 6,000 within the next five years.

The Alzheimer's Research Initiative represents the evolution of The Pat Summitt Clinic as it moves to become a nationally recognized Alzheimer's research center.

## ABOUT THE RESEARCH

While we have come a long way in our understanding of some of the changes that occur in the brain of patients with Alzheimer's disease and the associated decline in cognitive function, the actual cause of the disease remains elusive.

The University of Tennessee Medical Center's Pat Summitt Clinic is uniquely positioned to make a meaningful contribution to this area of research based on the multidisciplinary approach to patient care and the expertise of team members and collaborators from diverse

backgrounds that include neurology, anesthesiology, psychology and neuroscience.

The Alzheimer's Research Initiative supports three areas of focus that directly impact Alzheimer's patients, families and caregivers, including:

- A Brain Systems-based approach that looks beyond the basic cellular changes and studies the interaction between brain structure, brain function, pathology, and cognitive function. This approach incorporates a present and growing team of scientists from diverse areas of expertise collaborating and sharing research. Driven by The Pat Summitt Clinic Medical Director, Roberto Fernandez, MD, MPH, PhD, (pictured below) Coach Summitt's vision has united and inspired subject matter experts from across the medical center who are devoted to generating a broader view of Alzheimer's disease that fully incorporates the complexity of the brain and its interactions with the rest of the body and the environment. This research will lead to a better understanding of disease mechanisms, to the development of innovative markers for early detection, and new therapeutic approaches.
- Cutting edge Cognitive Neurology Research focused on measurable changes in brain-wave activity that may be a pre-indicator of the disease that could be

used for early detection and diagnosis; the effects of aging and Alzheimer's on spatial perception, navigation and driving capacity; and, the role of sleep in Alzheimer's disease.

- Patient and caregiver support are also integral to our Alzheimer's Research Initiative. The research team is collaborating with the UT College of Nursing to study Alzheimer's Patient Care models. A team of neuropsychologists, social workers, nurses and other health care coordinators are working to identify where problems are more likely to occur, the specific needs of patients, families and caregivers, and development of strategies that will result in improved safety and quality of life.

**JOIN OUR TEAM. BE INSPIRED  
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY.**

Support of The Pat Summitt Clinic's Alzheimer's Research Initiative is critical to the advancement of early diagnosis, treatment, and one day, a cure. All philanthropic gifts remain in East Tennessee supporting The Pat Summitt Clinic team in research, education, treatment and care of patients and families in our community.

**Teamwork**  
is what makes  
common people capable of  
uncommon results.

— Pat Summitt





For information on how you can help support the Alzheimer's Research Initiative,  
contact the Development Office at 865-305-6611 or [development@utmck.edu](mailto:development@utmck.edu).

[UTMedicalCenter.org/giving](http://UTMedicalCenter.org/giving)

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2121 Medical Center Way, Suite 110  
Knoxville, TN 37920-6999

The Pat Summitt Clinic was formed through a collaboration between UT Medical Center and the Pat Summitt Foundation, a fund of East Tennessee Foundation.

The University of Tennessee Medical Center is the home of the Knoxville campus of UT Graduate School of Medicine, UT College of Pharmacy and University Health System, Inc. Together, these entities embody the Medical Center's philosophy and mission to serve through healing, education and discovery.

**We Value** | Integrity • Excellence • Compassion  
Innovation • Collaboration • Dedication

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