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\*\*\*\*Volunteers needed for Alzheimer's  
disease drug studies

DALLAS -- Volunteers are needed for Alzheimer's disease drug studies at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

Alzheimer's disease, which causes mental deterioration, affects the brain and, eventually, most of the muscles in the body. It strikes about 1 in 10 people over 65 years old. The disease seems to run in families, so researchers believe there may be a genetic factor.

Finding volunteers is not easy even though as many as 180,000 persons suffer from Alzheimer's disease in Texas--25,000 of them in North Texas alone.

The main problem in determining whether drugs will help people with Alzheimer's disease is finding volunteers who are willing to participate in double-blind studies, said Doris Svetlik, research nurse in the Alzheimer's Research Center at UT Southwestern. (In double-blind studies some participants are given the drug that is being tested and others get placebos, which are harmless substitutes.) Volunteers also must have caretakers who are able to bring them for medical appointments.

"The idea of taking experimental drugs may bother some of the potential volunteers and their families," Svetlik said. "However, this is a disease with no cure, and we can offer hope for at least some patients." The medications are free, "and we offer lots of tender, loving care to patients and families," she said.

To find out more about these studies call 688-8696.

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NOTE: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas comprises Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School, affiliated teaching hospitals and outpatient clinics.