

Alzheimer's often goes undetected



BACHCHAN KUMAR

Renu Sachdeva takes care of her father Hansraj Kataria (83) who suffers from Alzheimer.

Barney Henderson
Mumbai, September 20

WHEN LHAWANTI Godhia started forgetting things and becoming restless, her family did not know what was wrong with her.

The 79-year-old Kandivli resident had been highly active. But a year ago she started forgetting her daily activities. "She has almost completely forgotten my daughter, which leaves me in tears," said her niece, Dr Meena Godhia. "At first we could not guess what the problem was but as it got worse we consulted a psychiatrist."

More and more Indians are falling prey to Alzheimer's with it often going undetected in Indian families and mindsets.

It can be difficult for caregivers as well, said Renu

Sachdeva, who is looking after her father Hansraj Kataria (83). "He would forget he had eaten his dinner and would not recognise old friends. It is very hard for me when he gets angry and throws tantrums, but I have to deal with him with love and patience," she said.

Over three million people are suffering from dementia in India, according to the latest figures from Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI). Worldwide, the number of people suffering dementia is increasing, with a new case every seven seconds.

NGOs have tried playing their part. Silver Innings has been running a week of programmes to sensitise different groups of society ranging from

the police to student nurses and have launched a campaign for signatures for ADI's Global Charter for Alzheimer's Disease that will be presented to central and state governments.



**WORLD
ALZHEIMER'S
DAY**

On Sunday, senior citizens throughout the city are invited to attend a lecture by Professor Sangeeta Rao, clinical psychologist at Ruia College, on coping with dementia

and screening a film, 'Burden of Love', which talks about the disease. "People with Alzheimer's are just written off as too old or mad," said Sailesh Mishra, founder president of Silver Innings, adding, "though it is a medical problem that can be cured if detected early."

barney.henderson@hindustantimes.com