

Dementia can strike at an early age, and it may be hard to recognise symptoms

Studies indicate that young-onset dementia is far more common than most doctors realise, and many practicing physicians fail to recognise it.

Many people aren't overly concerned when an octogenarian occasionally forgets the best route to a favourite store, can't remember a friend's name or dents the car while trying to parallel park on a crowded city street. Even healthy brains work less efficiently with age, and memory, sensory perceptions and physical abilities become less reliable.

But what if the person is not in their 80s but in their 30s, 40s or 50s and forgets the way home from their own street corner? That's far more concerning. While most of the 5.3 million Americans who are living with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia are over 65, some 200,000 are younger than 65 and develop serious memory and thinking problems far earlier in life than expected.

"Young-onset dementia is a particularly disheartening diagnosis because it affects individuals in the prime years," Dr David S Knopman, a neurologist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, wrote in a July 2021 editorial in JAMA Neurology. Many of the afflicted are in their 40s and 50s, mid-

career, hardly ready to retire and perhaps still raising a family.

Dementia in a younger adult is especially traumatic and challenging for families to acknowledge, and many practicing physicians fail to recognise it or even suspect it may be an underlying cause of symptoms.

"Complaints about brain fog in young patients are very common and are mostly benign," Dr Knopman told me. "It's hard to know when they're not attributable to stress, depression or anxiety or the result of normal ageing. Even neurologists infrequently see patients with young-onset dementia."

Yet recent studies indicate that the problem is far more common than most doctors realise. Worldwide, as many as 3.9 million people younger than 65 may be affected, a Dutch analysis of 74 studies indicated. The study, published in JAMA Neurology in September, found that for every 100,000 people aged 30 to 64, 119 had early dementia.

The accompanying editorial by Dr Knopman called young-onset dementia "an underappreciated problem." Its diagnosis, Dr Knopman wrote, is often delayed, and knowledge about its management is "in short supply as well."

The Dutch study found that overall, Alzheimer's disease was the most common cause of young-onset dementia. But when symptoms developed before age 50, early-onset Alzheimer's was a less likely explanation than two other causes: Vascular dementia and frontotemporal dementia.

Vascular dementia results from a blockage or injury to blood vessels in the brain that interfere with circulation and deprive the brain of oxygen and nutrients. Its most common symptoms, in addition to memory problems, are confusion, difficulty concentrating, trouble organising thoughts or tasks, and slowed thinking.

In frontotemporal dementia, portions of the brain that lie behind the forehead and



ears shrink, resulting in dramatic personality changes, socially inappropriate or impulsive behavior and emotional indifference. Movement and memory problems typically develop later in the course of the disease. According to the Mayo Clinic, frontotemporal dementia often begins between the ages of 40 and 65 and may be misdiagnosed as a psychiatric problem.

Lewy body disease is another cause of dementia in younger adults. It is associated

with abnormal deposits of a protein called alpha-synuclein in the brain that affects brain chemistry and leads to behavioural, thought and movement problems. Most of the symptoms are similar to those seen in other dementias, and additional symptoms like hallucinations may resemble schizophrenia, but the decline in brain function occurs significantly faster. A distinguishing symptom of Lewy body dementia is having violent dreams and attempting to act them

out, Dr Knopman said.

Alzheimer's disease remains the most common cause of dementia in younger as well as older adults. There is an inherited form of Alzheimer's that typically arises at younger ages, but those cases account for fewer than 10 per cent of young-onset disease. Most cases of Alzheimer's occur sporadically, for unknown reasons, though genetic factors may increase risk.

— New York Times.



What is the world's most remote restaurant and why is it in Singapore right now?



For well-heeled foodies weaned on the gleam and structure of fine European cuisine, a meal at a Nordic restaurant can be a confounding, if not shocking, experience.

There is little meal progression as we know it — more a procession of saucer after saucer of what we recognise as appetisers. A main course, or what we might perceive one to be, could comprise five seemingly disparate elements grouped together by virtue of a different sensibility from which a European chef might operate.

And then there are the flavours that chef Poul Andrias Ziska admits can challenge the palate. Imagine fish, first fermented only to be boiled, or fermented lamb intestines whose pungency one writer described as "between Parmesan cheese and death".

Such is the traditional fare of the Faroe Islands from which

Ziska hails; an autonomous outpost of the Kingdom of Denmark marooned 300 km north of Scotland. His restaurant, KOKS (which means "flirt" in Faroese; or, more aptly, one in pursuit of perfection), serves what he describes as "a showcase of what we eat in the Faroe Islands".

Getting to KOKS, located at the foot of the Leynavatn mountains, requires plenty of travelling and an adventurous spirit. It's not called "the world's most remote restaurant" for nothing. One must first fly to the Faroe Islands from Copenhagen (Denmark), Edinburgh (Scotland), Bergen (Norway) or Reykjavik (Iceland), before hitting a single-lane highway, navigating a dirt track, crossing a stream, and driving across rocky paths.

The reward for this undertaking is wildly stunning vistas of deep fjords and craggy mountains, and a dining experience like

no other.

Pandemic times, however, have deterred even the most indomitable foodies. It's no surprise then that KOKS' four-week residency at Grand Hyatt Singapore, which begins on Jan 23, has all but sold out (at the time of writing, there are a few remaining spaces for lunch).

To expect the KOKS' residency to offer its exact native elements would be to set yourself up for disappointment. In a phone interview with CNA Luxury, Ziska said that while he plans to bring with him Faroese specialties such as cod, langoustine and fermented ocean perch, the plan is to combine them with ingredients sourced here to create dishes that cleave close to what is served at the mothership.

"The fundamentals of the menu have been planned, but we will adjust some of the smaller details like the vegetables when we get [to Singapore]," he explained. "We might use some sort of radish instead of a root vegetable, for example. We have a dish featuring caviar which we usually make with halibut. In this case, I will look at what we have in Singapore [to use in place of the halibut]."

Signature dishes like one featuring fermented lamb tallow served with potatoes will be served in their original glory, and these might just be the ones to challenge palates.

"[Faroese] lamb is wild, so [the meat] is gamier and leaner than lamb from where you might usually get it," he said. "[The

KOKS, a 2 Michelin-starred restaurant from the Faroe Islands, looks set to challenge Singaporean palates with unfamiliar Nordic flavours at its monthlong residency at the Grand Hyatt. Fermented lamb tallow, anyone?

lamb] are somewhat farmed, but they just live off the mountains. Their only contact with people is really twice a year — when they need to have their wool cut and when they are slaughtered."

Given that the Faroe Islands are 99 per cent ocean, diners can expect far more seafood than lamb. In fact, Ziska added that the lamb is probably the only meat they will serve at the meals. "[Seafood is] really where our strength is. [In Leynavatn], only a matter of hours pass between the time the seafood is caught and the time our guests eat it."

The menu at the upcoming residency will feature 10 to 12 courses compared to the 17 to 20 served at KOKS. "At home, there are about three courses that are challenging... But I think we can allow ourselves to be a little daring. If you can eat 10 out of 12 dishes, then I think it's interesting that you've had an opportunity to taste something that's a bit challenging. We are always trying to balance the really strong [Faroese] flavours, which can be rough and rustic. We don't want to hide anything. We want to be honest and serve things as they are," he said. —CNA

Meat Loaf, singer of I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That), dies aged 74

Meat Loaf, the best known singer for the Bat Out Of Hell album and the hit song I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That), has died at the age of 74, a statement on his official Facebook page said.

No cause of death was revealed.

The American singer and actor, otherwise known as Michael Lee Aday, had a career spanning six decades, and sold more than 100 million albums worldwide.

His family said in a statement: "We know how much he meant to so many of you and we truly appreciate all of the love and support as we move through this time of grief in losing such an inspiring artist and beautiful man. From his heart to your souls...don't ever stop rocking!"

The singer was known for the bestselling album trilogy, Bat Out Of Hell. The second album, Bat Out Of Hell II: Back Into Hell yielded the hit song, I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That).

Aday died on Thursday (Jan 20) night with his wife by his side, according to Deadline, citing his longtime agent Michael Greene.

Greene also told the publication that the singer's daughters, Pearl and Amanda, as well as close friends had a chance to spend time with him and say their goodbyes.

His first Bat Out Of Hell album came out in 1977, a mega-selling collaboration with songwriter Jim Steinman and producer Todd Rundgren that made him one of the most recognisable performers in rock.

Fans fell hard for the roaring vocals of the long-haired, 250-plus pound singer and for the comic non-romance of the title track, You Took The Words Right Out Of My Mouth, Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad and Paradise By The Dashboard Light, an operatic cautionary tale about going all the way. After a slow start and mixed reviews, Bat Out Of Hell became one of the top-selling albums in history, with worldwide sales of more than 40 million copies. Meat Loaf wasn't a consistent hit maker, especially after falling out for years with Steinman. But he maintained close ties with his fans through his manic live shows, social media and his many television, radio and film appearances, including Fight Club and cameos on Glee and South Park.

His biggest musical success after Bat Out Of Hell was Bat Out Of Hell II: Back Into Hell, a 1993 reunion with Steinman that sold more than 15 million copies and featured the Grammy-winning single I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That). A native of Dallas, Aday was the son of a school teacher who raised him on her own after divorcing his alcoholic father, a police officer. Aday was singing and acting in high school (Mick Jagger was an early favorite, so was Ethel Merman) and attended Lubbock Christian College and what is now the University of North Texas. Among his more notable childhood memories: Seeing John F. Kennedy arrive at Love Field in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, then learning the president had been assassinated and driving to Parkland Hospital and watching a bloodied Jackie Kennedy step out of a car.

He was still a teenager when his mother died and when he acquired the nickname Meat Loaf, the alleged origins of which range from his weight to a favorite recipe of his mother's. He left for Los Angeles after college and was soon fronting the band Meat Loaf Soul. For years, he alternated between music and the stage, recording briefly for Motown, opening for such acts as the Who and the Grateful Dead and appearing in the Broadway production of Hair.

The album took more than two years to find a taker as numerous record executives turned it down, including RCA's Clive Davis, who disparaged Steinman's songs and acknowledged that he had misjudged the singer: "The songs were coming over as very theatrical, and Meat Loaf, despite a powerful voice, just didn't look like a star," Davis wrote in his memoir, "The Soundtrack of My Life." With the help of another Springsteen sideman, Steve Van Zandt, Bat Out Of Hell was acquired by Cleveland International, a subsidiary of Epic Records. The album made little impact until months after its release, when a concert video of the title track was aired on the British program the Old Grey Whistle Test. In the US, his connection to Rocky Horror helped when he convinced producer Lou Adler. —CNA

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