

Documentary on actor explores battle with Lewy body dementia

New Banner Alzheimer's Institute in Tucson able to treat patients diagnosed with Lewy bodies

TUCSON (Oct. 6, 2020) - Lewy body dementia is the second leading cause of dementia and [Banner Alzheimer's Institute](#) is equipped to diagnose, treat and care for in support of the growing number of patients facing the disease. A recently released feature documentary highlights the life and tragic death of comedian and actor Robin Williams and his private battle with Lewy body dementia. It is a progressive type of dementia that can lead to a decline in normal functions such as reasoning, thinking and independent function

In the movie "Robin's Wish," filmmakers shed light on this relatively unknown disease, which Williams was discovered to have after his death. Medical experts interviewed in the movie say the disease contributed to William's suicide in August 2014.

"We do know that Lewy body dementia can cause behavioral and psychological problems for these patients, including significant depression, sleep disturbances, and disturbing visual hallucinations," said [Allan Anderson, MD](#), medical director of [Banner Alzheimer's Institute in Tucson](#). "Like Alzheimer's unfortunately, there's currently no cure for Lewy body dementia. However, if detected and diagnosed early, we are able to help our patients control their symptoms and manage disease progression."

To help battle diseases such as Lewy body dementia, residents of Tucson and Southern Arizona are now able to benefit from the expanded services offered by Banner Alzheimer's Institute thanks to the recent opening of a new comprehensive memory and research center in the Old Pueblo. With a recent [\\$10 million charitable investment from the family of the late J. Orin Edson](#), Tucson will soon be home to the J. Orin Edson Family Lewy Body Dementia Center at the Banner Alzheimer's Institute, in addition to other programs and services from the philanthropic investment

"Patients of Lewy body dementia and their loved ones are fighting an uphill battle with this disease because there is no test or cure, so it can be overlooked or not diagnosed," said Dr. Anderson "While it is a leading cause of dementia, patients may not know they have it until it's too late as it is often misdiagnosed as Alzheimer's disease or some other dementia syndrome. We're hoping that by offering services that focus on these dementias, we can diagnose early and get them the treatment they need."

To learn more about Banner Alzheimer's Institute or to make an appointment, please call 520-694-7021.

About Banner Alzheimer's Institute

Through its research and care, Banner Alzheimer's Institute is dedicated to the goal of ending Alzheimer's disease without losing another generation. Founded in 2006 by Banner Health, one of the country's largest nonprofit health care systems, Banner Alzheimer's Institute is a Center of Excellence with a three-fold focus: to conduct revolutionary studies in the detection, treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's; to set a national standard of patient and family care; and to forge scientific collaborations that bring together institutions and disciplines internationally. For more information visit www.banneralz.org; or to support our programs and services go to give.bannerhealth.com/Alz.

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Editors' note: Dr. Allan Anderson is available to speak about Lewy body dementia and the J. Orin Edson Family Lewy Body Dementia Center. For interview requests, please reach out to media@bannerhealth.com

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