**Ymarfer 7**

Imagine leaving your house to walk down the street where you have always lived, a place you know like the back of your hand – only to realize that you have no idea where you are. This is just one of the symptoms of Alzheimer’s. 850,000 people in the UK are made strangers within their own homes by the horrifying effects of this disease.

Alzheimer’s is a disease which causes deterioration of the human brain. It is the most common cause of dementia and can develop so quickly that it is often not detected until it has progressed too far. The symptoms of Alzheimer’s are unique to each individual, however for most people, the earliest symptom includes memory lapses and trouble remembering details of recent events.

Alzheimer’s disease is not an inevitable part of normal ageing, nor even an acceleration of ageing; it is a true disease. But like heart disease and cancer, it is increasingly common as we age. The incidence of Alzheimer’s disease approximately doubles every 5 years over the age of 60, so that about 25% of those over 80 years old have the disease.

The symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease are caused by a loss of nerve cells in certain regions of the brain, such as the cerebral cortex, which control our higher mental functions. The degeneration of these nerve cells leads to the loss of millions of connections between them, such as the loss of connections linked to memory that causes the first symptoms.

[addasiad o ddeunydd ar wefan *Alzheimer’s Research*]