

10 common signs of Dementia



#STILLME



Know the signs of dementia

Your memory often changes as you grow older. But memory loss that disrupts daily life is not a typical part of ageing. It may be a symptom of dementia. Dementia is not a part of natural ageing, nor is memory loss the only symptom. If you have one or more of the following 10 symptoms which you are concerned about or which are affecting your daily life, it's a good idea to visit your GP. There are other conditions which can have similar symptoms so it is important to find out what might be causing them.

While people with a dementia might share similar symptoms, each person is unique. They still remain the same person they were before. To find out more about dementia and how you can get a diagnosis or how to best support someone with a dementia, please visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/dementia

1 Memory loss that disrupts daily life

A common sign in most types of dementia, especially in the early stages, is forgetting recent events. Others include forgetting important dates or events, repetition and increasingly needing to rely on memory aids (such as reminder notes or electronic devices) or family members for things they used to handle on their own.

What's a typical age-related change?

Sometimes forgetting names or appointments, but remembering them later.

2 Difficulty in planning or solving problems

Some people may find it more difficult to develop and follow a plan, or work with numbers. They may have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills. Doing certain things may take a bit longer too and they may also have difficulty concentrating.

What's a typical age-related change?

Making occasional errors with money or planning the day ahead.



3 Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work, or at leisure

People with a dementia often find it hard to complete daily tasks. Sometimes, they may have trouble driving to a familiar place, managing a budget or remembering the rules of a favourite game.

What's a typical age-related change?

Occasionally needing help to use the settings on a microwave or to record a television show.

4 Changes in mood

The mood of people with a dementia can change. They can become confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious. This may cause them to be upset at home or at work. They may also react unusually to friends or in places where they are out of their comfort zone.

What's a typical age-related change?

Feeling a little down sometimes or not liking to have a long-term routine changed.

5 Confusion with time or place

People with a dementia can lose track of times and dates. They may have trouble understanding something being planned in the future. Sometimes they may feel confused about where they are.

What's a typical age-related change?

Getting confused about the day of the week, but figuring it out later.

6 Trouble understanding what they are seeing

For some people, having vision problems can be a sign of a dementia. They may have difficulty reading, judging distance and determining colour or contrast, which may cause problems with driving. They may also have problems understanding what they see (rather than how sharply they see it) due to changes in the brain rather than the eyes.

What's a typical age-related change?

Vision changes related to ageing such as developing long-sightedness or cataracts.

7 Problems with words in speaking or writing

People with a dementia may have trouble following or joining a conversation. They may stop in the middle of a conversation and find it difficult to continue or they may repeat themselves. Finding the right word can also be a struggle, or they may call things by the wrong name, for example, calling a “watch” a “hand-clock”.

What’s a typical age-related change?

Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.

8 Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps

A person with a dementia may put things in unusual places. They may lose things and be unable to go back over their steps to find them again. Sometimes this might lead them to feel suspicious of others. This may occur more frequently over time.

What’s a typical age-related change?

Misplacing things from time to time, but being able to find them later.

9 Decreased or poor judgment

People with a dementia may experience changes in judgment or decision making. For example, they may use poor judgment when dealing with money. They may also pay less attention to their personal appearance.

What’s a typical age-related change?

Making a bad decision once in a while.

10 Withdrawal from work or social activities

A person with a dementia may start to remove themselves from social gatherings. This may be due to feeling a little embarrassed or worried because of the changes they are experiencing in terms of following conversations or making mistakes in front of others. This can lead to the person feeling isolated.

What’s a typical age-related change?

Sometimes being reluctant to go out just as much, but still being socially active.

To find out more about dementia, please visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/dementia



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