

What Is Dementia?

Dementia is not a single condition, it is a broad term that describes a collection of symptoms that relate to memory loss, issues with understanding and difficulty thinking. Dementia affects a person's personality, plus there will be a gradual decline in a person's capability to perform everyday tasks that can include activities of daily living. Although memory is the most distinct area affected in the early stages of dementia, other notable cognitive changes that will become noticeable as the person's condition worsens will include: organization, judgement, perception, reasoning, language, and the ability to handle stress or change.

Dementia is progressive, which means the symptoms will gradually get worse as more brain cells become damaged and eventually die. It is a symptom of many underlying diseases and brain disorders.

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Normal Aging vs. Aging With Dementia

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There is common forgetfulness that happens to everyone.

Common things we forget are:

- Names
- Where we put something
- Loss of words
- What we walked into a room for
- Where we parked our car

As we age, our brains change like our physical capabilities change. Everyone will notice:

- Slower recollection
- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty multi-tasking
- Not able to learn new things quickly

All of these things are completely normal. The time for concern is when the forgetfulness has started to interfere with a person's daily life and their ability to safely care for their self.