

Alzheimer's Disease Warning Signs

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	Checklist	What's Normal!	What's Not Normal!
1.	Memory loss	Forgetting names or appointments occasionally.	Forgetting recently learned information is one of the most common early signs of dementia. A person begins to forget more often and is unable to recall the information later.
2.	Difficulty performing familiar tasks	Occasionally forgetting why you came into a room or what you planned to say.	People with dementia often find it hard to plan or complete everyday tasks. Individuals may lose track of the steps involved in preparing a meal, placing a telephone call or playing a game.
3.	Problems with language	Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.	People with Alzheimer's disease often forget simple words or substitute unusual words, making their speech or writing hard to understand. They may be unable to find the toothbrush, for example, and instead ask for "that thing for my mouth."
4.	Disorientation to time and place	Forgetting the day of the week or where you were going.	People with Alzheimer's can become lost in their own neighborhoods, forget where they are and how they got there, and not know how to get back home.
5.	Poor or decreased judgment	Making a questionable or debatable decision from time to time.	Those with Alzheimer's may dress inappropriately, wearing several layers on a warm day or little clothing in the cold. They may show poor judgment about money, like giving away large sums to telemarketers.
6.	Problems with abstract thinking	Finding it challenging to balance a checkbook.	Someone with this disease may have unusual difficulty performing complex mental tasks, like forgetting what numbers are and how they should be used.
7.	Misplacing things	Misplacing keys or a wallet temporarily.	A person with Alzheimer's may put things in unusual places: an iron in the freezer or a wristwatch in the sugar bowl.
8.	Changes in mood or behavior	Occasionally feeling sad or moody.	Someone with Alzheimer's disease may show rapid mood swings – from calm to tears to anger – for no apparent reason.
9.	Changes in personality	People's personalities do change somewhat with age.	The personalities of people with dementia can change dramatically. They may become extremely confused, suspicious, fearful or dependent on a family member.
10.	Loss of initiative	Sometimes feeling weary of work or social obligations.	A person with this disease may become very passive, sitting in front of the TV for hours, sleeping more than usual or not wanting to do usual activities.