



# Dementia test



## **Dementia test**





***Relatives will often be the first to notice if a family member begins to show symptoms of dementia. Memory begins to fail, words do not flow as freely, and perhaps they have more and bigger mood swings than usual. However, there is a difference between the disease and what falls under normal aging. For example, it is quite normal for it to become harder to learn new things or not be able to perform tasks as quickly as before as when people become older.***

There are a number of different dementia tests on the internet. However, the best of all is to book a time for a dementia test with your own doctor as soon as you have the slightest suspicion. The problem with dementia tests is that you can have a dementia disorder even though you do not get enough points for the test to indicate cause for concern. Conversely, a dementia disorder does not necessarily have to be the cause of memory acting up or of finding it difficult to have the energy and desire to do anything. Your doctor can help to examine and clarify the cause of the symptoms.

Instead of a test, you can focus on the typical signs and symptoms of a dementia disorder. The United States Alzheimer's Association has published a list of 10 warning signs for Alzheimer's disease. The 10 signs are written in a way that makes it possible to use them as a 'checklist' for most other dementia disorders. The list is therefore a good tool for spotting the symptoms of dementia.

The original list can be found on the website of the American Alzheimer's Association.

## **1. Memory**

One of the most common signs of Alzheimer's disease, especially in the early stage, is forgetting recently learned information. Others include forgetting important dates or events, and asking for the same questions over and over.

What's a typical age-related change?

Sometimes forgetting names or appointments, but remembering them later.

## **2. Challenges in planning or solving problems**

Some people living with dementia may experience changes in their ability to develop and follow a plan or work with numbers. They may have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills. They may have difficulty concentrating and take much longer to do things than they did before. What's a typical age-related change?

Making occasional errors when managing finances or household bills.

### **3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks**

People with Alzheimer's often find it hard to complete daily tasks. Sometimes they may have trouble driving to a familiar location, organizing a grocery list or remembering the rules of a favourite game.

What's a typical age-related change?

Occasionally needing help to use microwave settings or to record a TV show.

### **4. Confusion with time or place**

People living with Alzheimer's can lose track of dates, seasons and the passage of time. They may have trouble understanding something if it is not happening immediately.

Sometimes they may forget where they are or how they got there.

What's a typical age-related change?

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

### **5. New problems with words in speaking or writing**

People living with Alzheimer's may have trouble following or joining a conversation. They may stop in the middle of a conversation and have no idea how to continue. Or they may repeat themselves. They may struggle with vocabulary, have trouble naming a familiar object or use the wrong name (e.g., calling a "watch" a "hand-clock").

What's a typical age-related change?

Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.

### **6. Decreased or poor judgment**

Individuals may experience changes in judgment or decision-making. For example, they may use poor judgment when dealing with money or pay less attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean.

What's a typical age-related change?

Making a bad decision or mistake once in a while, like neglecting to change the oil in the car.

### **7. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships**

For some people, having vision problems is a sign of Alzheimer's. This may lead to difficulty with balance or reading. They may also have problems judging distance and determining colour or contrast, causing issues with driving.

What's a typical age-related change?

Vision changes related to cataracts.

## 8. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps

A person living with Alzheimer's disease may put things in unusual places. They may lose things and be unable to go back over their steps to find them again. He or she may accuse others of stealing, especially as the disease progresses.

What's a typical age-related change?

Misplacing things from time to time and retracing steps to find them.

## 9. Changes in mood and personality

Individuals living with Alzheimer's may experience mood and personality changes. They can become confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious. People with dementia may also say whatever they are thinking, without taking into account the feelings of others.

What's a typical age-related change?

Developing very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted.

## 10. Withdrawal from work or social activities

A person living with Alzheimer's disease may experience changes in the ability to hold or follow a conversation.

As a result, he or she may withdraw from hobbies, social activities or other engagements. They may have trouble keeping up with a favourite team or activity.

What's a typical age-related change? Sometimes feeling uninterested in family or social obligations.

# Contact your doctor

Although you may find one or more of the 10 warning signs in yourself or your loved one, this is not the same as having a dementia disorder. It is completely normal to forget an appointment, a name, or not be able to find your purse, wallet, keys or phone as you leave the house. Sticky notes and lists are also used diligently in most homes to keep track of appointments, tasks and shopping.

The vast majority of people have also found that their vocabulary lets them down or that they cannot face social gatherings.

The important thing is to contact your doctor if the problems become worse than usual or happen more frequently.