

# What is Alzheimer's?

Alzheimer's is a disease of the brain that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior. It is not a normal part of aging.

Alzheimer's gets worse over time. Although symptoms can vary widely, the first problem many people notice is forgetfulness severe enough to affect their ability to function at home or at work, or to enjoy a lifelong hobby.

The disease may cause a person to become confused, lost in familiar places, misplace things or have trouble with language.

**It can be easy to explain away unusual behavior, especially for someone who seems physically healthy. Instead, seek a diagnosis as early as possible.**





## When memory loss is a warning sign

Many people worry about becoming more forgetful as they grow older. Our brains change as we age, just like the rest of our bodies. Most of us eventually notice some slowed thinking and problems remembering certain things. However, serious memory loss, confusion, and other major changes in the way our minds work are not a typical part of aging.

Many conditions can disrupt memory and mental function. Symptoms may improve when the underlying cause is treated.

Anyone experiencing significant memory problems should see a doctor as soon as possible. Methods for early diagnosis are improving dramatically, and treatment options and sources of support can improve quality of life.

An early diagnosis helps individuals receive treatment for symptoms and gain access to programs and support services. It may also allow them to take part in decisions about care, living arrangements, money and legal matters.

## Possible causes of memory problems include:

- Depression
- Medication side effects
- Poor diet
- Excess alcohol use
- Thyroid Issues
- Vitamin Deficiencies
- Infections
- Alzheimer's disease & dementia





# What is the difference?



## Signs of Alzheimer's / Dementia

- Poor judgement and decision making
- Inability to manage a budget
- Losing track of the day or the season
- Difficulty having a conversation
- Misplacing things and being unable to retrace steps to find them



## Typical Age-Related Changes

- Making a bad decision once in a while
- Missing a monthly payment
- Forgetting which day it is and remembering later
- Sometimes forgetting which word to use
- Losing things from time to time