

9 Differences

Between Signs of Normal Ageing & Symptoms of Dementia

Age-related Changes

vs

Dementia

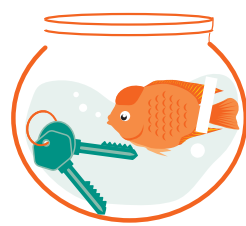
Occasionally forgetting names or appointments and events, but being able to remember them later. Sometimes, completely forgetting what others have mentioned.



Problems with memory

May have trouble remembering people or important dates and events, and/or ask for the same information over and over again to the point that this can affect their daily activities (e.g., getting around and making purchases).

Occasionally misplacing items, but being able to retrace steps to find them.



Misplacing items

Losing items and being unable to retrace steps to find them. Placing things in unusual places (e.g., placing a mobile phone in the refrigerator), and/or accusing others of stealing. These behaviours might occur more frequently over time.

Age-related vision changes, such as cataracts or glaucoma, can result in poor vision.



Problems with visual perception

Becoming unable to recognise objects and faces due to changes in the brain. Difficulty in identifying patterns, colours, distances and spaces (e.g., perceiving glare on the floor as a pool of water).

Due to age-related health reasons, such as muscle weakness and joint problems, may need support to sit, stand and walk. May lose their balance and fall more easily.



Problems with walking & mobility

Gradually losing abilities and needing support to sit, stand and walk due to changes in the brain. May lose balance and fall more easily.

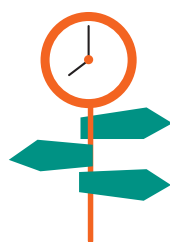
Getting tired of work, family and social activities sometimes, and feeling a little down or anxious. Occasionally becoming irritable when familiar routines or specific ways of doing things are disrupted.



Changes in mood, behaviour & personality

Having rapid mood swings for no apparent reason, withdrawing from group activities, becoming passive, and sleeping more than usual. Becoming a little insensitive towards others.

Occasionally getting confused about the day of the week but able to figure it out later. Sometimes, going to a spot in the house and forgetting the reason of going there, but able to remember the reason again.



Confusion with time & places

Being unable to tell the time, or experiencing confusion about meal times (e.g., asking for lunch at night). Being unable to recognise their location, even their own home, which leads to feelings of frustration in unfamiliar or noisy environments. Getting lost in familiar places they often go to.

Experiencing a bit of difficulty finding the right word sometimes. Needing to concentrate harder to keep up with a conversation, but sometimes losing track of the conversation if distracted or if multiple people speak at the same time.



Difficulties in communication

Struggling to express themselves, and having trouble finding the right word or naming objects. Having problems understanding what others are saying, and sometimes stopping conversations without knowing how to continue.

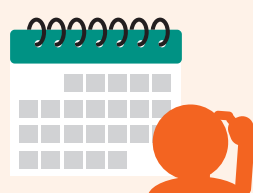
Making a bad decision once in a while.



Judgement & social behaviour

Not knowing if it is safe or correct to do certain things (e.g., giving large amounts of money to strangers, or shouting and taking off clothes in public).

Being a bit slower to react to things or think things through, and becoming less able to multitask, especially when distracted. Occasionally making a mistake, e.g. when planning the monthly household budget.



Difficulties in planning, thinking & completing familiar tasks

Having difficulty planning and carrying out familiar and daily tasks (e.g., organising a grocery list, managing the monthly household budget and paying bills, or remembering the rules of a favourite game). Paying less attention to grooming or hygiene. Having trouble concentrating and following instructions, and because of this, taking a much longer time to do things.