

# Memory Concerns Checklist

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
I have trouble remembering events that happened recently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have trouble finding the right word	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have trouble remembering the day and date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I forget where things are usually kept	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have difficulty adjusting to any changes in my day-to-day routine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have problems understanding magazine or newspaper articles or following a story in a book or on TV	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I find it hard to follow and join in conversations, particularly in groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have problems handling financial matters, such as banking or calculating change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have difficulty with everyday activities such as remembering how long between visits from family or friends, or cooking a meal I have always cooked well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am losing interest in activities I'd normally enjoy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have difficulties thinking through problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family and/or friends have commented about my poor memory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other concerns:			

If you have ticked 'sometimes' or 'often' it is recommended that you see your doctor.

## About Alzheimer's Australia

Alzheimer's Australia is the national peak body representing people with dementia, their families and carers.

Alzheimer's Australia provides information, support, advocacy, education services and programs to improve the lives of people living with dementia.

Alzheimer's Australia is an advocate for people with dementia, their families and carers and encourages people with early stage dementia, their families and carers to share their voices and experiences and take part in advocacy opportunities.

## More information

Further information about dementia and dementia risk reduction is available from Alzheimer's Australia.

Visit our website [www.alzheimers.org.au](http://www.alzheimers.org.au)

Phone the National Dementia Helpline **1800 100 500**



Here's what you can do...



[www.alzheimers.org.au](http://www.alzheimers.org.au)

National Dementia Helpline

An Australian Government Initiative

**1800 100 500**



# Worried about your memory?

# Feeling forgetful or confused?

## Finding out if there is a problem is the first step to getting help

Have you become concerned about increasing lapses in memory, or other changes in thinking or behaviour for yourself, a family member or friend? Changes in memory and thinking have a number of possible causes that may include stress, depression, pain, chronic illness, medication or alcohol and sometimes it is a sign of early dementia. Major changes in memory are not normal at any age and should be taken seriously.

If you or someone you know is experiencing these kinds of difficulties it is better to see your doctor sooner rather than later.

## Talking to your doctor

There is no single specific test that can show whether someone has dementia. A diagnosis is made by talking to you and perhaps a relative or friend to find out more about your difficulties with memory and thinking. You will also need a physical and neurological examination which will look at all other possible causes.

### During the visit:

- Take your list of concerns with you – it will provide a useful basis for further discussion and tests
- Talk to your doctor about your concerns honestly and openly, including how long you have been experiencing these problems
- Bring a list of the medications that you are taking including the doses (or bring all your tablets in a bag). Don't forget inhalers, creams, herbal medications and vitamins

### Remember you can:

- Ask for a longer appointment
- Take a relative, carer or friend with you
- Ask questions and request further explanations if you don't understand
- Take notes during the visit
- Discuss the option of further assessment by a specialist

## The earlier you act the better

The symptoms may not be caused by dementia, but if they are, earlier diagnosis will be helpful. An early diagnosis means that you can have access to support, information and medication. People with a diagnosis of dementia should have an opportunity to participate in planning the rest of their lives and their finances as well as indicating their wishes regarding future care.

*"We are glad we had that early diagnosis as we have been given the chance to change our lifestyle activities to match my capabilities and to make definite plans for the future."*

**Maria** diagnosed with vascular dementia

*"It was a relief to get the diagnosis – the worst was not knowing."*

**Fred** diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease

## What is dementia

Dementia is a general term to describe problems with progressive changes in memory and thinking. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia. Dementia can happen to anybody, but it becomes more common over the age of 65, and especially over the age of 75. Early signs may not be obvious – only a doctor or specialist can properly diagnose dementia.