



# 7 Signs That a Family Member May Have Dementia



Our family is the most important thing in our lives; The souls that we hold dearest to our hearts.

Some of us have closer relationships than others to our parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, cousins, aunts and uncles, but never-the-less we are bound by blood.

As we grow older sometimes family members can seem to get weirder or maybe they are just getting stuck in their ways. But there comes a time in life when we need to start looking out for them just like they looked out for us when we were younger.

As people in our family grow older, especially into their 60's, it is important that they have at least one person keeping an eye on them for any possible signs that they cannot take care of themselves anymore and need help.

Dementia is a disease that can devastate a person's life and family, and completely take away your family member's ability to complete daily tasks at all.

It's important to catch this early on to make sure that they get the help they need to maintain a good quality of life. So we've created a quick list to help clue you in on some of the signs that your family member may need help.

**Here are 7 signs that a family member may have dementia:**

## 1. Changes in mood or personality

Like I said in the beginning of this article, some of us have closer relationships than others to our family, but during the times we are with our family, it's important to monitor their behavior.

Are they overly moody or anxious?

Do they interact with you or other family members at the same level or are they more reclusive and to themselves? Seeing big changes means it may be time to contact a doctor.

## 2. Social Interaction may be a bit off

This goes a bit with the first point as to mood and personality.

Is grandpa still going to meet his friend for golf?

Is mom still going to lunch with her close friends?

It's also a good practice to invite family members over or out to an event to spend close time with them in order to see if you notice anything is off. Plus, it gives you an excuse to spend time with family.

## 3. Loss of judgement or the ability to make good decisions

This can be a big one because as memory or brain functioning decline you can quickly lose the ability to drive a car or manage finances and pay bills on time. Insurance payments can lapse and people can become a threat to others if safety is involved.

Loss of judgement can come in many forms. It is important to look for signs because you may be heading off a major crisis.

## 4. Losing or forgetting things constantly

When we are close to family we may notice that they are constantly losing things or forgetting to do things. Sometimes it may be their keys or purse and wallet. Other times it may be missing important events like birthdays or picking up someone from the airport. Look for patterns of forgetfulness.

## 5. Mispronouncing words

Aphasia is a dead ringer for dementia and is pretty easy to spot. If your family member starts to pronounce words a bit different or delivers the word with a stutter, delay, or wrong pronunciation that's a sure sign. Sometimes you will notice that they mess up a vowel. For example they may trade an "e" for an "a", or they have trouble pronouncing a word in a particular way. Again, this is very easy to spot and will worsen over time. Definitely contact your doctor or neurologist to give a proper diagnosis.

## 6. Being confused about time of day

When mom is up while everyone else is sleeping it may be just restlessness but can also be a sign of dementia. The confusion of waking up in the morning and going to bed in the evening can grow as dementia forms.

As dementia starts to creep in you may notice that your family member is taking naps during the day that they may have not taken before, and then they are up at night walking around the house. As this worsens they may even wonder why others are not up with them and try to wake others up. If there is a pattern of “sleep walking” or napping out of the norm it may be time to contact a doctor.

## 7. And lastly, Not completing normal daily activities

Normal daily activities like brushing your teeth, making coffee, making breakfast, taking a shower, putting on deodorant are all examples of activities that a person performs constantly. Noticing if your family member is doing these things as they normally do usually requires you to be close enough that you can watch for these things. If you do not live with your family member look out for signs like bad breath or body odor. Look for dirty fingernails or other visual signs too. This may clue you in that it's time to talk to a doctor.

## When to see a doctor

A person who experiences any of these symptoms or notices them in a loved one should speak to a medical professional as soon as possible!

According to the Mayo Clinic, cognitive function doesn't always get worse as a person gets older, and mild cognitive decline doesn't necessarily mean a person has dementia so it is important to seek a doctor's professional opinion.

Although there is no cure for dementia yet, a doctor can help slow the progression of the disease and ease the symptoms, and so improve a person's quality of life.

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