

Memory Loss

What could it be?



Though some age-related memory loss is normal, Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are not. Let's look at some differences.

Age-related forgetfulness

- Making a bad decision once in awhile
- Occasionally forgetting to pay a bill or missing a due date
- Losing things on occasion but later finding them in a logical place
- Sometimes forgetting which day it is but remembering later
- Forgetting the word you want to use or someone's name from time to time

Signs of dementia

- Frequently showing poor judgment or making bad decisions
- Losing track of the year or season
- Having trouble following everyday conversations
- Misplacing things often and not being able to find them or finding them in strange locations
- Problems handling everyday finances or multiple late payments

If you are concerned

- Annual wellness exams, covered by Medicare, should include a **COGNITIVE SCREENING**.
- **TALK WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS**. Are they noticing a change in your memory, cognition, or behavior? Discuss your concerns with them.
- **SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR DOCTOR**. Write down your concerns and ask a family member or friend to go with you to your appointment.
- Expect your doctor to **ORDER TESTS** to rule out reversible causes of memory loss, such as: medication interactions and side effects, thyroid problems, liver or kidney issues, infections, vitamin deficiencies, hearing issues, blood clots, tumors, depression, anxiety, sleep problems, and head injuries.