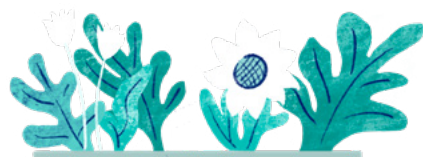


# Is it Alzheimer's disease or old age?

This table can be a handy resource to compare how Alzheimer's disease can differ to normal signs of ageing. However, please remember that everyone experiences the disease differently. If you notice any of these changes, a proper diagnosis should always be carried out by a healthcare professional.<sup>1-4</sup>

NORMAL AGEING	SIGN	ALZHEIMER'S DEMENTIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes forgetting names or appointments but remembering them later</li> <li>Misplacing things from time to time, such as a pair of glasses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Memory loss that affects daily life</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forgetting names of close friends and family or recent events such as visitors that they had that day</li> <li>Asking for the same information over and over, and relying on memory aides</li> <li>Putting objects in unusual places and being unable to retrace steps to find them</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being a bit slower to react and getting less able to juggle multiple tasks, especially when distracted</li> <li>Occasionally making mistakes when doing finances</li> </ul>	<p><b>Trouble with planning and problem-solving</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having a lot of difficulty concentrating and getting very confused when planning or thinking things through</li> <li>Struggling to develop and follow a plan, such as following a familiar recipe</li> <li>Having trouble keeping track of monthly bills or generally work with numbers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes having trouble finding the right word</li> <li>Needing to concentrate harder to keep up with a conversation, especially if many people are speaking at once</li> </ul>	<p><b>Problems with language</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequently having trouble finding the right word or calling things by the wrong name</li> <li>Having trouble following or joining a conversation</li> <li>Stopping in the middle of a conversation and having no idea on how to continue</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Getting confused about the day of the week, but figuring it out later</li> <li>Forgetting why they entered a room but remembering again quickly</li> </ul>	<p><b>Confusing the time or place</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Losing track of the date, season and the passage of time</li> <li>Forgetting where they are or how they got there, even if they are in a familiar place</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making a bad decision once in a while</li> </ul>	<p><b>Decreased or poor judgement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequently poor judgement when dealing with money and assessing risks, such as giving large amounts of money to telemarketers</li> <li>Paying less attention to grooming and hygiene</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision changes related to cataracts or other changes in the eyes, such as cloudy vision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Problems with visual perceptual skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty interpreting visual information, such as reading, judging distance or misinterpreting patterns</li> <li>Problems with parking the car, driving safely</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occasionally needing help with recording a television show or changing the settings on a microwave</li> </ul>	<p><b>Being unable to complete familiar tasks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having trouble getting to a familiar location or remembering the rules of a favourite game</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes feeling a bit low or anxious</li> <li>Developing very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted</li> </ul>	<p><b>Changes in mood, personality and behaviour</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Getting unusually sad, anxious or frightened, and becoming easily upset</li> <li>Outbursts and sudden aggressive reactions even if that was not a known characteristic of the person</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes feeling weary of work, family and social obligations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Withdrawal from work and social activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removing from hobbies, social activities, work projects or sports</li> <li>Avoiding being social because of the changes they are experiencing</li> </ul>



1) Alzheimer's Association. Is it Alzheimer's or just signs of aging? 2011; 2) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Alzheimer's disease and healthy ageing. Healthy brain initiative. Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/healthybrain/ten-warning-signs.html>; 3) Alzheimer Society. Canada. Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://alzheimer.ca/en/about-dementia/do-i-have-dementia/differences-between-normal-ageing-dementia>; 4) Alzheimer's society. Normal ageing vs dementia. Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/about-dementia/symptoms-and-diagnosis/how-dementia-progresses/normal-ageing-vs-dementia>.