



Warning Signs of Dementia:

What's Normal and What's Not

The Alzheimer's Association has developed this list of 10 warning signs, to educate the community about dementia:

1. **Memory loss:** forgetting recently learned information and being unable to recall information later. **What's normal?** Forgetting occasionally
2. **Difficulty performing familiar tasks:** difficulty planning or completing tasks, such as how to prepare a meal. **What's normal?** Occasionally forgetting why you came into a room or what you planned to say.
3. **Problems with language:** Forgetting simple words or substituting words so that it is hard for someone else to understand you. **What's normal?** Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.
4. **Disorientation to time and place:** Getting lost in your own neighborhood, forgetting where you are and how you got there. **What's normal?** Forgetting the day of the week or where you were going.
5. **Poor or decreased judgment:** Dressing inappropriately for the weather, poor judgment about money. **What's normal?** Making a questionable decision from time to time.
6. **Problems with abstract thinking:** Having unusual difficulty performing complex

mental tasks. **What's normal?** Finding it challenging to balance a checkbook.

7. **Misplacing things:** putting things in the wrong place such as a wristwatch in the sugar bowl. **What's normal?** Misplacing keys or a wallet temporarily.

8. **Changes in mood or behavior:** Showing rapid mood swings from calm to tears to anger for no apparent reason. **What's normal:** Occasionally feeling sad or moody.

9. **Changes in personality:** becoming extremely confused, suspicious, fearful or dependent. **What's normal?** Some modest change in personality.

10. **Loss of initiative:** becoming very passive, sleeping more than usual, or not wanting to do the usual activities. **What's normal?** Sometimes feeling weary of work or social obligations.

A Care Manager Can Help

If a family member or a client seems to be experiencing some of these early warning signs, it would be wise to see a doctor to find out the reason. Early diagnosis of dementia gives more opportunity for treatment and planning. Our care managers can assist in finding an appropriate medical specialist, help to follow up on recommendations, and assist in the development of needed plans. **Call Jill Hyatt at 414 963-2600** to schedule an appointment.

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