

10 Warning Signs of Abnormal Memory Changes or Dementia

Everyone slows down as they get older, both in body and mind. But **big changes that make it hard to get through the day** are not a normal part of aging. Some people notice changes in themselves. Sometimes, friends and family are the first to see changes in memory, behavior, or abilities. If you have one or more of these 10 warning signs, see a doctor to find the cause.



American Indian and Alaska Native elders have a higher risk of dementia & younger Indian and Native people report *more* memory problems at a younger age

Big changes in memory, thinking, and ability that make it hard to get through the day are **not a normal part of aging.**

People with one or more of these 10 warning signs should **see a doctor** to find the cause.

Other health problems may also cause these same symptoms and may be treated.

Early diagnosis gives you a chance to seek treatment and plan for your future.



**AMERICAN INDIAN
and ALASKA NATIVE**
RESOURCE CENTER FOR BRAIN HEALTH

www.AIANBrainHealth.org

www.cdc.gov/aging

[www.alz.org/publichealth/
indiancountry](http://www.alz.org/publichealth/indiancountry)

- 1 Memory loss that disrupts daily life:** forgetting events, repeating yourself or relying on more aids to help you remember (like sticky notes or reminders).
- 2 New trouble planning or solving problems:** having a hard time paying bills or cooking recipes you have used for years.
- 3 Difficulty with familiar tasks at home, at work, or at leisure:** having problems with cooking, driving places, using a cell phone, or shopping.
- 4 Confusion with time or place:** having trouble understanding an event that is happening later, or losing track of dates.
- 5 Trouble understanding visual images and information:** having more difficulty with balance or telling distance, tripping over things at home, or spilling or dropping things more often.
- 6 New problems with words speaking or writing:** having trouble following or joining a conversation or struggling to find a word you are looking for (saying “that thing on your wrist that tells time” instead of “watch”).
- 7 Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps to find them:** placing car keys in the washer or dryer or not being able to retrace steps to find something.
- 8 More slips in judgement or acting impulsively:** being a victim of a scam, not managing money well, paying less attention to hygiene, or having trouble taking care of a pet.
- 9 Withdrawing from work or social activities:** not wanting to go to church, cultural events, other activities as usual, not being able to follow radio shows or sports games or keep up with what’s happening.
- 10 Changes in mood and personality:** getting easily upset in every day situations or being fearful or suspicious.