

## Is it Alzheimer's or Just Old Age?

Don't most people get forgetful as they get older? Yes. Think of the brain like a computer. Over a lifetime, it fills up with more and more information. As the memory fills up, it slows down—just like a computer. Does this mean that everybody has Alzheimer's disease? NO. There are **ten warning signs** of Alzheimer's disease.



- Forgetting how to perform tasks at work.
- Forgetting how to perform simple, everyday tasks at home.
- Having trouble with language, even forgetting simple words.
- Being disoriented to time and place.
- Showing poor judgment.
- Having problems with thinking.
- Misplacing things frequently.

### Time To Chuckle...

*Mr. Brown, age 80, went to see his doctor because of a nagging earache. The doctor examined Mr. Brown's ear and found a rectal suppository in the ear canal! Mr. Brown said, "Well, that explains what happened to my hearing aid!"*

- Having frequent changes in mood or behavior.
- Showing drastic changes in personality.
- Losing motivation for living a normal life.

Remember, too, that there are other curable conditions that cause symptoms similar to Alzheimer's disease. Some of these conditions are vitamin deficiency, stroke, thyroid disease, infections, depression, and medication side effects.

## What's the Difference Between Alzheimer's and Dementia?

The word "dementia" comes from a Latin word that means "out of one's mind." Dementia is actually a *group of symptoms* that indicate a person's ability to think is deteriorating. That is why a person with dementia suffers from loss of memory, problems with all kinds of skills, orientation problems and changes in behavior.

People are often diagnosed with dementia when they lose their mental skills and abilities, including the ability to take care of themselves. **Alzheimer's disease is just one kind of dementia.** In fact, it is the most common kind.

So, yes, all people with Alzheimer's disease have dementia. But a diagnosis of dementia does not mean that someone has Alzheimer's. There are about 50 different conditions that can cause dementia, some of which are treatable.



Remember that only a physician can diagnose Alzheimer's disease, and only after a complete physical and mental examination.