

# Medicines to help memory and thinking

Although no current medicines stop, slow down or reverse dementia, some can help people with their memory and thinking.

## Which medicines can help with dementia?

Four medicines treat some types of dementia:

- donepezil
- rivastigmine
- galantamine
- memantine.

## Who do these medicines help?

These medicines are offered to people with Alzheimer's disease, dementia with Lewy bodies, or Parkinson's disease dementia, as well as mixed dementia involving any of these types. The medicines do not work for everyone.

For some people, they help with memory and thinking. This can help a person to stay motivated and may also reduce anxiety. Any benefits should be noticeable after a few weeks.

These medicines do not help memory and thinking in people with frontotemporal dementia (FTD) or vascular dementia. However, the doctor may suggest medicines to help with other symptoms, such as anxiety, depression or behaviour caused by the dementia.

## Taking and stopping medicines

There are things that can make taking medicine correctly easier. This includes checklists, reminders and pill boxes. Speak to your doctor if you are unsure about how or when to take your medicine.

It's important not to stop taking a medicine without speaking to your doctor first, as this may make symptoms worse. This includes if you are fasting for religious or spiritual reasons.

## Do these medicines have side effects?

A small number of people who take the medicine will experience side effects. Talk to your doctor about side effects and ways to reduce them. If the medicine you are taking causes side effects, the doctor might ask you to try another.



Factsheet 407, **Drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease** has more information. To read it, go to [alzheimers.org.uk/drug-treatments](https://alzheimers.org.uk/drug-treatments)



We are here for you. If you are worried about dementia, call us on **0333 150 3456**. We can arrange to speak with you in any language.



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