

What is dementia?

Dementia is a range of symptoms that show that the brain has a disease. As this disease causes changes in the brain, it cannot work properly.

Only some people get dementia. It does not happen to everyone as they get older.

Most people with dementia have Alzheimer's disease or vascular dementia. Fewer people with dementia have dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) or frontotemporal dementia (FTD). There are other types of dementia that smaller numbers of people get.

Most people with dementia are over 65 years old. But younger people can also get dementia and this is called young-onset dementia.

What are the symptoms of dementia?

A person with dementia may forget things. They may think, feel, speak and act differently. They can be confused. These changes can be small but they will get worse. How quickly this happens can be very different from person to person. After some time, the person will need more help to do the things they usually do.

If you notice any changes and are worried about yourself or someone else, speak to your GP.

For support, call Alzheimer's Society on 0333 150 3456.

What causes dementia?

There are reasons why a person might be more likely to get dementia. These risks include getting older, certain genes, injury, aspects of health and lifestyle (for example, lack of physical activity, bad diet, alcohol and smoking).

There is lots of research looking into the brain and why dementia develops.

Can a person get better from dementia?

There is no cure for dementia. A person can live well with dementia but cannot get better from it. Staying healthy and getting the right support can be helpful.

Some people with dementia need a lot of help. Others may not need help for a long time after they find out they have dementia. Dementia shortens how long a person will live for. However, people can live with it for many years.



Factsheet 400, **What is dementia?** has more information. To read it, go to alzheimers.org.uk/what-is-dementia. For more information about our helpsheets, go to alzheimers.org.uk/helpsheets



Alzheimer's Society is 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.



Join Talking Point, our online community of people affected by dementia – go to alzheimers.org.uk/talkingpoint
To find support in your area, go to alzheimers.org.uk/dementiadirctory

