

Dementia: Warning Signs

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1. misplacing things
2. challenges in planning
3. confusion with time or place
4. decreased or poor judgement
5. challenges in solving problems
6. losing the ability to retrace steps
7. changes in mood and personality
8. memory loss that disrupts daily life
9. new problems with words in writing
10. trouble understanding visual images
11. new problems with words in speaking
12. withdrawal from work or social activities
13. trouble understanding spatial relationships
14. difficulty finishing tasks at home, work or leisure

Progression of the Disease – Levels of Cognitive Loss

- ♦ It is NOT part of normal aging! It is a disease!
- ♦ It is more than just forgetfulness - which is part of normal aging
- ♦ It makes independent life impossible

Level 1: Early Loss; Routine; Repeating Stories

Early Loss; Running on Routine; Repeating Stories

- ☐ Some word problems and loss of reasoning skill
- ☐ Easily frustrated by changes in plans or routines
- ☐ Seeks reassurance but resents take over
- ☐ Still does well with personal care and activities
- ☐ Tends to under or over estimate skills
- ☐ Seeks out authority figures when upset or frustrated
- ☐ Points out others' errors, but doesn't notice own behavior
- ☐ May have some awareness – "Just not right" – might blame others or self
- ☐ Can't remember 'new' rules, locations, plans, discussions, facts

Level 2 – Moderate Loss - Just Get It Done!

Moderate Loss - Just Get It Done! – Wanting a Purpose and a Mission

- ☐ Gets tasks done, but quality is getting to be a problem
- ☐ Leaves out steps or makes errors and WON'T go back and fix it
- ☐ Can help with lots of things – needs some guidance as they go
- ☐ Likes models and samples – uses others' actions to figure out what to do
- ☐ Asks "what /where/when" LOTS
- ☐ Can do personal care tasks with supervision & prompts – often refuses "help"
- ☐ Still very social BUT content is limited and confusing at times
- ☐ May try to 'elope' /leave to get to a 'older' familiar time or situation OR get away from 'fighting'
- ☐ Can't remember what happened AND can mis-remember it – goes back in time, at times

Level 3 – Middle Loss: Hunting & Gathering

See It – Touch It – Take It – Taste It – Hunting & Gathering

- ☐ Touches and handles almost anything that is visible
- ☐ Does not recognize other's ownership – takes things, invades space, gets 'too close'
- ☐ Can still walk around and go places – 'gets into things'
- ☐ Language is poor and comprehension very limited - does take turns
- ☐ Responds to tone of voice, body language and facial expression
- ☐ Loses the ability to use tools and utensils during this level
- ☐ Does things because they feel good, look good, taste good – refuses if they don't
- ☐ Stops doing when it isn't interesting anymore
- ☐ Can often imitate you some – But not always aware of you as a person

Level 4: Severe Loss – Gross Automatic Action

Severe Loss – Gross Automatic Action – Constant GO or Down & Out

- ☐ Paces, walks, rocks, swings, hums, claps, pats, rubs....
- ☐ Frequently ignores people and small objects
- ☐ Doesn't stay down long in any one place
- ☐ Often not interested in/aware of food – significant weight loss expected at this level
- ☐ Can grossly imitate big movements and actions
- ☐ Generally enjoys rhythm and motion – music and dance
- ☐ Doesn't use individual fingers or tools (more eating with hands)
- ☐ Either moves toward people and activity (feels like a shadow) or leaves busy, noisy places (ghost)
- ☐ Chewing and swallowing problems are common – soft, ground, or puree food may be needed
- ☐ May not talk much at all, understands demonstration better than gestures or words

Level 5: Profound Loss - Stuck in Glue

Profound Loss - Stuck in Glue – Immobile & Reflexive

- ☐ Generally bed or chair bound – can't move much on own
- ☐ Often contracted with 'high tone' muscles - primitive reflexes reappear
- ☐ Poor swallowing and eating
- ☐ Still aware of movement and touch
- ☐ Often sensitive to voice and noise - startles easily to sounds, touch, movement...
- ☐ Difficulty with temperature regulation
- ☐ Limited responsiveness at times
- ☐ Moves face and lips a lot, may babble or repeatedly moan or yell
- ☐ Give care in slow, rhythmic movements and use the flats of fingers and open palms
- ☐ Keep your voice deep, slow, rhythmic and easy as you talk and give care

