



Is It Normal or Is It Dementia?

We all know that as we age, certain changes occur in our bodies. We aren't as flexible as we used to be or are able to run as fast as we once did. Gray hair starts to take over our head and wrinkles become more dominant on our face. While the saying is true that age is just a number and you're only as old as you feel, when forgetfulness becomes more common, many seniors begin to ask themselves, "am I getting dementia?"



Normal Aging

There are certain memory changes that are expected as we age. Our brains take longer to process, store, and retrieve information the older we get. It becomes more difficult to multi task as we age, which is why you may have found yourself walking into the bedroom from the kitchen forgetting why you came into the bedroom in the first place. Perhaps your spouse was talking with you while you were walking to get your glasses off the night stand, and in that short distance, you completely forgot what you were looking for. This is normal aging.

As we grow older, it also becomes difficult to remember names and places, especially of newer people or places. Have you ever forgotten the names of your grandchildren or great-grandchildren? Sure, this happens to everyone. This is normal. Have you found it difficult to find the new restaurant or your doctor's new office? This is also normal. What isn't normal aging is if you have forgotten that you have grandchildren or great-grandchildren, or if you can't remember how to get home from a familiar store.

Dementia

The [Alzheimer's Association](#) defines dementia as "a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life." Dementia is not a specific disease, but an umbrella term that describes a wide variety of memory decline and other symptoms associated with memory loss. Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia are the two most common forms of dementia.

When seniors or their adult children begin to wonder if they have dementia, it is important to evaluate their day-to-day routine. It may be time for a professional evaluation when daily life is disrupted in one or more of the following core brain functions:

- Recent memory—the ability to learn and recall information

- Language—the ability to write or speak and to understand words, written or spoken
- Visuospatial Function—the ability to use symbols, navigate, and understand maps
- Executive Function—problem solving, the ability to plan or reason

Visiting Angels is very familiar with dementia care services and believes in offering choices to create a customized plan of care that meets your needs. We also believe in training our caregiving staff so they are well versed in dementia education. Whether you have received a recent diagnosis of memory impairment or are simply looking for more assistance in your day-to-day routine, we can provide you with the services you need. [Give us a call](#) to set up a consultation.

Visiting Angels of Denver and Boulder, CO

303-232-9999

www.visitingangels.com/Denver

www.facebook.com/VisitingAngelsDenver

www.visitingangels.com/Boulder

www.facebook.com/VisitingAngels.BoulderCounty