

Ten Warning Signs of Alzheimer's Disease

1. Memory loss that affects job skills
2. Difficulty performing familiar tasks
3. Problems with language
4. Disorientation to time and place
5. Poor or decreased judgment
6. Problems with abstract thinking
7. Misplacing things
8. Changes in mood or behavior
9. Changes in personality
10. Loss of initiative

How to Contact Us

The Division of Alzheimer's Disease & Other Dementia is located in the Department of Mental Health's Central Office in Jackson with satellite offices in Oxford, Magee, and Long Beach. For more information please contact:

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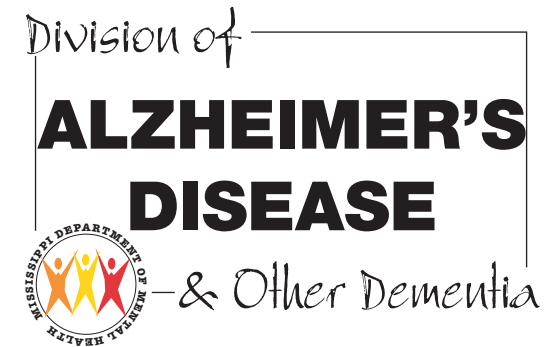
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What You Should Know About Alzheimer's Disease

Mississippi Department of
Mental Health
www.dmh.ms.gov

Communication Techniques

- Identify yourself & address the person by name.
- Ask one question, or make one statement at a time.
- Allow enough time for the person to respond.
- Use nonverbal communication such as pointing or nodding.
- Be patient, flexible & reassuring.
- Focus on feelings, not facts.
- Do not criticize, argue or correct the person.
- Speak slowly, directly and clearly.
- Use familiar words & cues.
- Establish & maintain eye contact.
- Smile & be friendly in your approach.
- Be consistent & repeat information or questions as needed.
- Respond to & validate the person's feelings.
- Provide assistance when needed.

Caregiver Tips

- Recognize added stress in your life.
- Realize it is OKAY to ask for help from a friend.
- Accept help when offered.
- Take a day off when you can.
- Do something fun for yourself.
- Share your feelings with someone.
- Remove yourself from the situation when possible.
- Cry – do not be afraid to express your feelings.
- Take care of your own health care needs.
- Join a caregiver support group.
- Remember, you are not in this alone.

Caregiving is a difficult job in the best of circumstances. Taking care of yourself is essential for your own health and the care of your loved one.

Getting Help

Where to Go for an Evaluation:

- Family physician
- Local hospital
- Teaching hospitals or medical schools
- Geriatricians
- Neurologists

There is no single diagnostic test for Alzheimer's disease. A diagnosis is made by ruling out other possible causes of Alzheimer-like symptoms. Once all tests are completed, a diagnosis of "probable" Alzheimer's disease may be made.

What to Expect During an Evaluation

The entire evaluation process generally takes more than one day. Typically, a thorough evaluation may include:

- Detailed medical & social history
- Physical examination
- Neurological examination
- Mental status examination
- Psychiatric evaluation
- Laboratory tests
- CT, MRI and/or PET scans

See your doctor for more information and help.