

Tips for Assessing Aging Behavior

Some degree of cognitive decline is normal as we age, but sometimes it is difficult to know what is normal aging and what might be signs of a more advanced cognitive decline such as dementia or Alzheimer's Disease. This list is designed to guide you with that first step. If you have any questions or concerns, it is best to seek professional guidance.

The following are examples of normal aging:

- Changes in ability to multi-task
- Slowing of thinking speed
- Simple forgetfulness such as placement of keys or cell phone
- Delay or slowing in recall of dates, names or events

The following are examples of when to seek support services:

- Difficulty with remembering to take medications
- Difficulty with finances
- New onset of changes in behavior or mood
- Difficulty remembering appointments or events
- Getting lost going to familiar places
- Difficulty with word finding
- Forgetting familiar names and familiar places
- Difficulty with transition of environments
- Difficulty with keeping up with self-care/hygiene
- Repetition of statements
- Forgetting to eat meals
- Weight loss
- Frequent falls
- Refusing to bathe
- Refusing to accept assistance with care

If your loved one is displaying two or more of these behaviors, it is recommended that you make an appointment with a healthcare professional such as your primary care physician or a geriatrician. It is recommended that your loved one be accompanied at their appointment. It is also helpful to have a list of questions, concerns and possible behavior patterns with you at the appointment.

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Advanced Nutrition For
Lifelong Brain Health
www.neuroreserve.com



Family Dementia Coaching To Help
Navigate Your Unique Circumstances
www.thememorycompass.com

Tips for Coping with Cognitive Decline

Supporting your Loved One

Making things safe and familiar should be priorities.

- Prevent falls by ensuring that trip hazards are out of the way and the shower has grab bars or a shower chair.
- Having a daily routine for things such as meals, showers, and activities is important. Also, sticking to a regular time to take medications and possibly scheduling reminders on their phone or other medication reminder device.
- Encourage them to get appropriate levels of physical activity, whether it's walking with you doing chair fitness at the local senior center or regular cleaning or gardening chores at home.
- Be calm and respectful. These changes can feel confusing and frustrating for them.

Caring for Yourself

It's easy to get focused on the needs of your loved one and neglect yourself. Caregiver burnout is common. Consider these suggestions to keep yourself healthy.

- Schedule time out; identify someone you feel comfortable with to cover for you so you can get away from responsibilities for a while.
- Stay physically active; a few short walks during the day are healthy for body and mind.
- Eat a Mediterranean style diet to stay healthy now and maintain your own cognitive health.
- Consider a vitamin supplement if you can't always stick to those healthy Mediterranean dietary patterns.
- Join a caregiver support group. Many of these are available virtually.
- Seek professional help if you are feeling overwhelmed.

Notes and Questions

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