



information

Dementia

An Easy Read leaflet explaining:

- what dementia is.
- the changes that can happen when someone has dementia.
- who can help support someone with dementia.



Created by the Easy Read Group: Nicholas Lambourne,
Caroline Loveless and Hazel Cheesman

 Health & care
information
you can trust

The Information Standard

 Certified
Member

Author: Katrina Glaister
Role: Nurse
Date written: June 2013
Last reviewed: May 2016
Review date: May 2019
Version: 1.1
Code: PI1044

What is dementia?



Dementia is a name for an illness in the brain.

Your brain is inside your head. Your brain helps you to remember what to do.

Your brain tells your body what to do.

You use your brain to talk.

You use your brain to get dressed.

You use your brain to walk.

You use your brain when you drink, eat and swallow food.

Your brain helps you to remember faces and names.

When a person has dementia their brain does not work normally.

A person with dementia can:

- forget people's names.
- get confused about where he or she is.
- find it hard to remember things, particularly things that happened recently.
- forget words.



A person with dementia can lose skills that he or she had before, for example:

- using a knife and fork.
- getting dressed.



When a person has dementia they can find it hard to tell people how they feel.

Their behaviour can start to change.

They might get upset and cry.

They might get angry and scream.



Dementia is more common in people with learning disability.

It is even more common in people who have Down's syndrome.

Some people with Down's syndrome may have dementia when they are young.

But, not everyone with Down's syndrome will develop dementia.

What causes dementia?



There are different types of dementia.

Different types of dementia have different causes.

If you want to know more about this, you can speak to your GP or nurse.

How can my doctor tell I have got dementia?



Your doctor will ask your carer about any changes in your memory or ability to do things.

The doctor may ask to do a health check.

You may need to have blood tests and a brain scan.



After getting the results, your doctor will explain to you and your carer if you have dementia or not.

What can be done?



A person with dementia needs:

- good support.
- to be in the right environment.
- help with communication.
- regular health checks.

Medication may be useful but it is not a cure. It can help people feel better and live independently for longer.

Medication is not suitable for everyone with dementia.

Your doctor will discuss this with you.



Support for a person with dementia

Lots of people can help and support a person who has dementia:



A hospital doctor, GP or psychiatrist can work out what is wrong and suggest medications to help.

A social worker will help arrange the best support for a person with dementia.



Physiotherapists can help if there are problems with movement. They can help people to remain independent with everyday activities.

Occupational therapists can help understand how much a person with dementia can do to look after themselves and how much help and support they need.



A speech and language therapist can work out what help someone with dementia needs to communicate.



A carer or family member often knows the person with dementia best, and can help professionals understand that person.

Support groups



Alzheimer's Society

Alzheimer's Society is the leading support and research charity for people with dementia, their families and carers.

Salisbury & District Local Service Office

29a Brown Street

Salisbury, SP1 2AS

 01722 326 236



www.alzheimers.org.uk



Mencap

Charity providing information, advice and support services for people with learning disabilities.

 0808 808 1111 (Learning Disability Helpline)

South Wilts Mencap

Email: info@southwiltsmencap.org.uk



www.southwiltsmencap.org.uk