

The difference between an aging brain and dementia

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Forgetting small things such as dates, and events and difficulty in recalling old information can be a normal part of aging. But at what

point does it go too far? Do you have to worry every time your memory seems to fail you?

It's important to note that dementia is not part of the normal aging process and [memory loss](#) is not the only symptom of dementia, according to the National Institute on Aging.

What does a normal aging brain look like?

As you age, your brain begins to shrink, especially the [frontal lobe](#) and hippocampus, according to the Columbia Mailman School of Public Health. This shrinkage is attributed to some of the [memory](#) loss you may experience as you grow older. According to Medical News Today, some memory changes may include difficulty in learning new information, issues with multitasking, slower recall of names and numbers, and difficulty remembering appointments. Oftentimes, you may forget something temporarily but are able to recall it later. These are all a part of the normal aging brain.

What may be just normal lapses in memory can cause aging adults to feel fearful that they may be experiencing dementia instead. So, what does memory loss caused by dementia look like?

Memory loss caused by [dementia](#) often disrupts your [daily life](#) and you're unable to recall information. Dementia can cause difficulty in completing tasks, confusing time and place, changes in your personality or mood, social withdrawal, poor judgment, problems with having conversations, and difficulty in solving problems, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

The National Institute on Aging recommends you visit the doctor if you find yourself:

- Repeatedly asking the same questions.
- Getting lost in places you're familiar with.
- Finding it hard to follow recipes or directions.
- Becoming more confused about places, people and time.
- Neglecting your hygiene and health.

So, if once in a while, you find yourself forgetting something minor or recalling something slower, you don't have to worry. If your forgetfulness starts becoming more frequent and happening daily, that's when you should reach out to your [health care provider](#) for further guidance.

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