

What Should I Do If I Am Worried About My Memory?

The sooner you know, the more you can do.

Noticing changes? You're not alone.

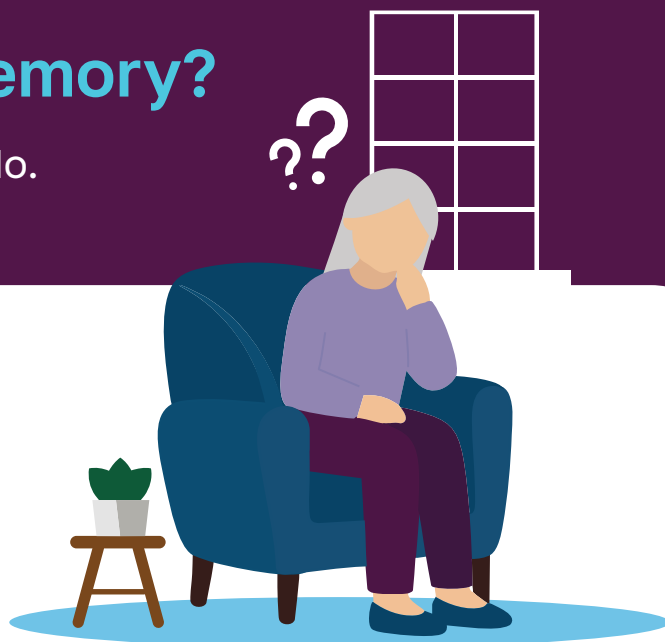
It's normal to feel concerned if you notice changes in your memory, thinking or mood.

Memory changes can have many causes. Sometimes they are temporary and/or treatable. Sometimes they may be related to Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) or dementia. The sooner you understand what's causing the changes, the sooner you or your family member can get the right support.

Forgetting names, misplacing items, or losing track of conversations can happen to anyone, but when changes feel different or more frequent, they're worth paying attention to.

Taking action early can help you understand what's happening and get the right support.

Many of us will experience some form of memory loss after we turn 65 years old but many cases remain stable or improve when underlying causes are identified.



What kinds of changes might I notice?

- Do you sometimes forget things or events—even ones that happened recently?
- Are you having trouble remembering names, recognizing familiar faces, or recalling acquaintances' names?
- Do you sometimes forget words or struggle to find the right ones in conversation?
- Do you have trouble remembering details of recent events or outings?
- Are you losing things like your keys, glasses, or phone?
- Do you find it harder to multitask?
- Are you more easily distracted?
- Is it harder to go back to a task after being interrupted?
- Is it harder for you to process or understand information?
- Have you noticed changes in your mood, such as feeling more anxious, worried, or depressed?
- Have others noticed changes in your mood, personality, or behaviour?

What else could be affecting my memory?

Memory changes don't always mean dementia.

In fact, there are **many common and often treatable reasons** why your memory may be affected.

These can include:

- Stress, anxiety, or depression
- Side effects of medications (or combinations of medications)
- Sleep problems (including poor sleep or sleep apnea)
- Anemia
- Vitamin deficiencies (such as low vitamin B12)
- Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs)
- Thyroid problems
- History of stroke
- Alcohol use
- Fatigue or low energy
- Dehydration or poor nutrition
- Head injury or concussion

Many of these factors can affect memory, focus and concentration. Many can be improved with the right care and support.

What can I do next?

1. Pay attention and keep track

Write down changes you notice. This can help you see patterns and have clearer conversations later.

2. Talk to someone you trust

Sharing your concerns with a friend, partner, or family member can help you feel supported.

3. Speak to a health care provider

Talking to your doctor or nurse practitioner is a normal and helpful next step. They can help you figure out what's going on and guide you forward.



What to expect when you meet with a health care provider?

Your provider may:

- Ask about your symptoms and health history
- Review your medications and supplements
- Do simple memory or thinking tests
- Order tests (like bloodwork) to determine what may be causing your concerns

This is about understanding, not jumping to conclusions.

Consider bringing a trusted family member or friend to your appointment. They may notice changes you haven't recognized and can help remember the information discussed.

Why acting early is a small step that matters

- ✓ It can bring clarity and peace of mind
- ✓ Some causes of memory changes can be treated (like anemia or thyroid problems)
- ✓ You can access supports and treatments sooner if needed
- ✓ It helps you stay healthy and independent longer

You don't have to figure this out alone

Noticing changes is the first small step. Talking about it is the next.

Starting the conversation is a small step that can make a big difference.

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