



TAKECHARGE

WELCOA'S SELF-CARE BULLETIN

COULD IT BE ALZHEIMER'S?

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, so it's a good time to learn about this condition and what you can do to stay in charge of your health. Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that affects memory, thinking and behavior. Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia, a general term for memory loss and other cognitive abilities serious enough to interfere with daily life. According to the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's disease accounts for 60 to 80 percent of dementia cases.

Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging. There are several warning signs and symptoms you should be aware of. **If you notice any of them, don't ignore them.** Schedule an appointment with your doctor.

SIGNS OF ALZHEIMER'S

Signs of Alzheimer's may include, but are not limited to:

Regular forgetfulness. One of the most common signs of Alzheimer's disease, especially in the early stage, is forgetting recently learned information. Others include forgetting important dates or events, asking for the same questions over and over, and increasingly needing to rely on memory aids (e.g., reminder notes or electronic devices).

Difficulty or failure to complete simple tasks. People with Alzheimer's often find it hard to complete daily tasks. Sometimes they may have trouble driving to a familiar location, organizing a grocery list, or remembering the rules of a favorite game. Some people living with dementia may experience changes in their



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

ability to develop and follow a plan or work with numbers. They may have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills.

Losing track of time and/or place. People living with Alzheimer's can lose track of dates, seasons and the passage of time. Sometimes they may forget where they are or how they got there.

Difficulty with words and/or social interactions. People living with Alzheimer's may have trouble following or joining a conversation. They may stop in the middle of a conversation and have no idea how to continue. As a result, they may withdraw from hobbies, social activities or other engagements. They may also struggle with vocabulary, have trouble naming a familiar object or use the wrong name.

Drastic changes in mood and personality. Individuals living with Alzheimer's may experience mood and personality changes. They can become

confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful, or anxious. They may be easily upset at home, with friends or when out of their comfort zone.

If you notice one or more signs in yourself or another person, it's important to take action to figure out what's going on. Getting checked by your doctor can help determine if the symptoms you are experiencing are truly due to Alzheimer's or some other condition. If Alzheimer's is the cause, an early diagnosis is ideal because it allows you to access treatment options early. While current medications do not prevent, stop, or reverse Alzheimer's, they can help lessen the symptoms, such as memory loss and confusion. An early Alzheimer's diagnosis provides you with a better chance of benefiting from treatment.

