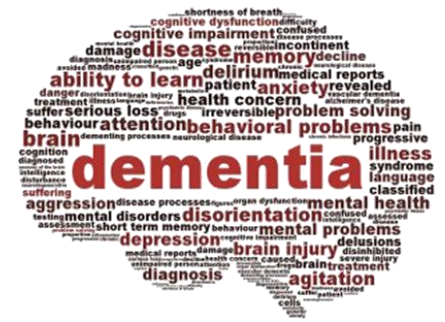


# Dementia

## What is dementia?

Dementia is a condition that causes loss of memory, thought control, and judgment. Alzheimer disease is the most common cause of dementia. Other common causes are loss of blood flow or nerve damage in the brain, and long-term alcohol or drug use. Dementia cannot be cured or prevented, but treatment may slow or reduce symptoms.



## What increases risk for dementia?

- A family history of dementia
- Diseases such as diabetes or high blood pressure
- A head injury, brain tumour, or stroke
- Toxins such as alcohol or cigarette smoke
- Lack of activity or exercise
- Viruses and bacteria that cause illnesses such as HIV and syphilis

## What are the signs and symptoms of dementia?

Dementia may develop quickly over a few months after a head injury or stroke. It may develop slowly over many years if you have Alzheimer disease. Patient memory and other mental abilities may decline steadily. They may stay the same for a time and then decline again.

- Loss of short-term memory, followed by loss of long-term memory
- Trouble remembering to go to the bathroom to urinate or have a bowel movement
- Anger, or violent behaviour
- Depression, anxiety, or hallucinations

## How is dementia diagnosed?

- **Memory testing**
- **Blood tests**
- **MRI or CT scan**

## How is dementia treated?

- **Dementia medicines** may be used to help slow the decline in memory.
- **Antipsychotics** may be used to help improve behaviour, and control anger or violence.
- **Antianxiety medicine** may be used to help reduce anxiety and keep calm.
- **Antidepressants** may be used to help improve mood and reduce symptoms of depression.

Reference: Micromedex's Care Notes System Online 2.0