

Life Letter *mature*

Recognize the signs of Alzheimer's - Part 2

As we age, it's normal for our memory to change. However, Alzheimer's Disease warning signs are more than simple lapses in memory. According to the Alzheimer's Association, victims experience difficulties learning, communicating, reasoning and thinking. These changes can be severe enough to impact an individual's family life, work and social activities.

In Part 1, the following Alzheimer's Disease warning signs and normal age-related memory changes were covered:

- 1. Memory Loss**
- 2. Difficulty performing familiar tasks**
- 3. Problems with language**
- 4. Time and place disorientation**
- 5. Poor or decreased judgment**
- 6. Problems with abstract thinking**

Here's the rest of the checklist:

- 7. Misplacing things** - Temporarily misplacing a wallet or keys is normal. A person with Alzheimer's disease may put things in unusual places, such as an iron in the freezer or a wristwatch in the sugar bowl.
- 8. Mood or behavior changes** - It is normal to occasionally feel sad or moody. A person

with Alzheimer's disease may experience rapid mood swings, from calm to tears to anger, for no apparent reason.

9. Personality changes - A person's personality normally changes somewhat with age. The personality of a person with dementia can change dramatically. They may become extremely confused, fearful, suspicious, or dependent on a family member.

10. Loss of initiative - It is normal to sometimes feel weary of work or social obligations. An Alzheimer's disease victim may become very passive, sitting in front of the TV for hours, sleeping more than usual or not wanting to do their normal activities.

Bear in mind there is no clear-cut line between normal changes and warning signs. It is always a good idea to check with a doctor if a person's level of function seems to be changing. Early diagnosis is the first step to getting proper treatment and obtaining the best care and support possible.

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