



# Is This Dementia?

## What to look for and why it matters

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Dementia is an umbrella term for several diseases affecting memory and behavior. Alzheimer's disease (AD) is the most common disease under the dementia umbrella. AD is a progressive brain disease that affects memory, thinking, and behavior. Here are some of the most common symptoms seen in individuals with AD:

1. Memory loss that disrupts or interferes with daily life
2. New challenges with planning or solving problems
3. Difficulty completing tasks that previously felt familiar
4. Uncharacteristic lapses in judgement
5. Withdrawal from work or social activities

Alzheimer's disease can also impact an individual's mental health. These so called “neuropsychiatric symptoms” involve a wide range of behavioral and mood changes that can contribute to patient and caregiver distress

### Symptoms may include:

1. Mood disturbances (depression and anxiety)
2. Apathy
3. Personality changes
4. Agitation and irritability
5. Psychosis

**>90% of AD patients develop at least one neuropsychiatric symptom during the course of their illness. In general, symptoms tend to worsen with disease progression**

**49%**

Apathy is present in approximately half of those with AD

**33%**

At least 33% of AD patients will show signs of irritability

**42%**

Around 42% of those with AD will struggle with depression

- Make an appointment with your primary care physician (PCP).
- Your PCP may wish to do further testing including cognitive tests and basic lab work. A PCP can also help refer you to specialists if indicated.