

## DEMENTIA

Have you ever wondered why older people have problems with remember simply phrases someone's said or things that have been done? Have you ever heard a story about your friend's grandparents got lost? Or are you afraid that you loose your keys much too often? If you have answered at least once with *yes*, should read what is written in this work.

As the title said I am going to focus on what is happening with human being when it comes to aging. First of all it is worth just explaining the term *dementia* since it will be helpful to avoid panic for these once who may find it similar with loosing keys.

The word dementia describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language. These changes are often small to start with, but for someone with dementia they have become severe enough to affect daily life. A person with dementia may also experience changes in their mood or behaviour. (<http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>)

I would like to add dementia affects mostly people at, as it is called, overall old age (means about 65). Alas loosing your keys means you are just a person who needs to clean your living place and kipping things in order, however, that also give you the assurance that you are not defective. Meanwhile, more and more people worry about their mental and physical health in their adulthood they forget about these once who really may confess they do suffer. The antiquity touches our old mother, grandfather or even the neighbour living next door who have always been, mind you, full of energy and strength.

Even though it is not so difficult to notice the illness while someone is really sick, it seems impossible to point out the beginning of the dementia. Here are written some of the possible symptoms that should draw your attention:

1) loosing day-to-day memory

Forgetting about situations took place the days before is common in the beggining of dementia. Elders might be asking a lot of questions connected with simplest things like *are we going to meet with Jenn tonight?* while they actually met her the day before.

2) difficulties making decisions, solving problems or carrying out a sequence of tasks

Making a simply meal can suddenly cause problems. Moreover, the person may forget what have already been done and try to do this one more time. It does not sound dangerous untill it does not concern boiling water or frying meat.

3) problems with seeking or finding appropriate words to describe something

There is not much to explain. Everyone of us have met at lest once a person who knew what he wanted but could not really explain this. People who suffer from dementia are not alert to the fact they are not using typical language. It may be compared to trying to talk with a stranger from a different country with local phrases.

4) inappropriate orientation

Getting lost just after going out. No more to add.

The dementia is not what should be called an illness. However, it causes illnesses such as

Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia or dementia with Lewy bodies. These diseases are not results of dementia but it is their main symptom even though the dementia has it's own ones. That what should interest people as much as recognizing this disability (we may put this term here in order to point the dangerous importance of the topic) is the treatment. Lost memories are not easy to be recalled but still we may slow down the process of development the disease. The vast majority of causes of dementia cannot be cured, although research is developing drugs or other medical treatments. Every person with dementia problem should be treated as a unique individual, and that means that care must be „person-centered”. Drug treatment can help to improve the symptoms of dementia or even, in some cases, may stop them progressing for a while. Most know medicines are donepezil, rivastigmine and galantamine. However, doctors must be aware of them because people with dementia mostly are old and have other problems with blood pressure, high cholesterol or heart. Moreover doctors should be ready for facing depression or anxiety and decide which kind of drug will progress the condition of their patient.

On the other hand there are also non-drug treatments, more natural. They are based on therapies and helping people with dementia to use their brain. It is not the way that can be done alone (the drug treatment can) . This kind of treatment in some time will need the „cold shoulder” of medicines. The rehabilitation can enable an individual to retain mental skills and raise their confidence (people start believe in them and are more relaxed). There is also lots that can be done at home to help someone with dementia remain independent and live well with memory loss. Support ranges from devices such as pill boxes or calendar clocks to practical tips on how to develop routines or break tasks into simpler steps. For example, if someone lives with a person with dementia he should help making notes all over the house. *If you want to make a tea, you should take a tea-bag from the shelve above. Keep the fridge closed. Turn off the lights.* Is not it difficult, is it?

What would be surprising for someone is the facts that activities also are the treatment. As the condition progresses, many people with dementia enjoy reminiscence and life story work (in which the person is encouraged to share their life experiences and memories). Such activities may help improve someone's mental abilities, mood and well-being.

It is vital that people with dementia stay as active as they can - physically, mentally and socially. Everyone needs meaningful activities that they enjoy doing and which bring confidence and self-esteem. So there is no logical explanation why most of us believe people with dementia should only stay at home with a cat on their laps. These ones should be encouraged to talk with others, to paint, or to write diaries. These activities will not stop the illness but for sure will cause longer and easier life.

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