

Here are some brief information and key facts about dementia. For more information please go to the Alzheimer's Society website. Links are provided below.

### What is dementia?

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. Dementia is caused when the brain is damaged by diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease or a series of strokes. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, but not the only one.

The specific symptoms that someone with dementia experiences will depend on the parts of the brain that are damaged and the disease that is causing the dementia.

For more information about dementia, different types, causes, symptoms, how it is diagnosed and treated please go to:

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/about-dementia/types-dementia/what-dementia>

### Some key facts about dementia

#### **1. Dementia is not a natural part of ageing**

It does not just affect older people, over 40,000 people under 65 in the UK have dementia. This is called early-onset or young-onset dementia.

#### **Help and support**

- If you are worried about your memory, or about someone else, the first thing to do is make an **appointment with the GP**
- If you have been diagnosed with dementia and are worried you or someone you know is getting worse

Call the Community Mental Health Team on **0203 222 8500** and ask to speak to a **Dementia Service Nurse**

For information, advice and support call the City and Hackney Alzheimer's Society on **020 8533 0091** and ask to speak to a **Dementia Navigator**

#### **2. Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain**

Diseases such as Alzheimer's disease cause nerve cells to die, damaging the structure and chemistry of the brain.

Everyone experiences dementia in their own way. Lots of things can affect this, including the person's attitude to their diagnosis and their physical health. Other factors include the relationships they have with friends and family, the treatment and support they get, and their surroundings.

### 3. It is not just about losing your memory

And it does often start by affecting the short-term memory. Someone with dementia might repeat themselves and have problems recalling things that happened recently, but dementia can also affect the way people think, speak, perceive things, feel, and behave.

### 4. People can still live well with dementia

Although there is no cure for dementia, scientists and researchers are working hard to find one. Until that day comes, support and treatments are available that can help with symptoms and managing daily life. These can allow people with dementia to lead active, purposeful lives and carry on doing the things that matter to them most.

#### **Treatments**

There are drugs available that may help with some types of dementia and stop symptoms progressing for a while. This is one reason why it is important to go to the GP as soon as you suspect there is a problem.

#### **Other things that can help with symptoms of dementia include:**

- cognitive stimulation, which might involve doing word puzzles or discussing current affairs
- life story work, sharing memories and experiences with a carer or nurse to create a 'life story book'
- keeping as active as possible – physically, mentally, and socially – which can boost memory and self-esteem and help avoid depression.

For more information on the key facts about dementia please go to:

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/about-dementia/five-things-you-should-know-about-dementia>