

## Know the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's Disease

*Submitted by the Alzheimer's Association®, Greater Illinois Chapter*

Your memory often changes as you grow older. But memory loss that disrupts daily life is NOT a typical part of aging. It may be a symptom of dementia. Dementia is a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. The most common form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease, a fatal disorder that results in the loss of brain cells and function.

"It may be hard to know the difference between age-related changes and the first signs of Alzheimer's disease," explained Danielle Dodson, care navigator, clinical supervisor for the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Illinois Chapter. "Ask yourself: Is this something new? For example, if the person was never good at balancing a checkbook, struggling with this task is probably not a warning sign. But if their ability to balance a checkbook has changed a lot, it is something to share with a doctor."

Some people may recognize changes in themselves before anyone else notices. Other times, friends and family will be the first to observe the changes in the person's memory, behavior or abilities. To help, the Alzheimer's Association has created this list of warning signs for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Individuals may experience one or more of these in different degrees. If you notice any of them, please see a doctor.

Here are the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's disease:

1. Memory changes that disrupt daily life
2. Challenges in planning or solving problems
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks
4. Confusion with time or place
5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
6. New problems with words in speaking or writing
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
8. Decreased or poor judgment
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities
10. Changes in mood and personality

For more information about Alzheimer's disease please call 1.800.272.3900 or to attend a free Know the 10 Signs program [www.alz.org/illinois](http://www.alz.org/illinois).