

## Maywood Patient Information About dementia

As you get older, you may find that memory loss becomes a problem. It's normal for your memory to be affected by age, stress, tiredness, or certain illnesses and medications. This can be annoying if it happens occasionally, but if it's affecting your daily life or is worrying you or someone you know, you should seek help from your Maywood Healthcare professionals.

### How common is dementia?

According to the [Alzheimer's Society](#) there are around 800,000 people in the UK with dementia. One in three people over 65 will develop dementia, and two-thirds of people with dementia are women.

The number of people with dementia is increasing because people are living longer. It is estimated that by 2021, the number of people with dementia in the UK will have increased to around 1 million.

### What is dementia?

Dementia is a common condition that affects about 800,000 people in the UK. Your risk of developing dementia increases as you get older, and the condition usually occurs in people over the age of 65.

Dementia is a syndrome (a group of related symptoms) associated with an ongoing decline of the brain and its abilities. This includes problems with:

- memory loss
- thinking speed
- mental agility
- language
- understanding
- judgement

People with dementia can become apathetic or uninterested in their usual activities, and have problems controlling their emotions. They may also find social situations challenging, lose interest in socialising, and aspects of their personality may change.

A person with dementia may lose empathy (understanding and compassion), they may see or hear things that other people do not (hallucinations), or they may make false claims or statements.

As dementia affects a person's mental abilities, they may find planning and organising difficult. Maintaining their independence may also become a problem. A person with dementia will therefore usually need help from friends or relatives, including help with decision making.

Your Practice Nurse or GP will discuss the possible causes of memory loss with you, including dementia. Other symptoms can include:

- increasing difficulties with tasks and activities that require concentration and planning
- depression
- changes in personality and mood
- periods of mental confusion
- difficulty finding the right words

Most types of dementia can't be cured, but if it is detected early there are ways you can slow it down and maintain mental function.

### Why is it important to get a diagnosis?

An early diagnosis can help people with dementia get the right treatment and support, and help those close to them to prepare and plan for the future. With treatment and support, many people are able to lead active, fulfilled lives.