



MOSAIC

MEANINGFUL OUTREACH & SUPPORT FOR AGING INDIVIDUALS & CAREGIVERS

CAREGIVERS GUIDE



**QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER
AN ALZHEIMER'S OR
DEMENTIA DIAGNOSIS**

THE FAMILY CAREGIVER'S GUIDE

QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER AN ALZHEIMER'S OR DEMENTIA DIAGNOSIS

A new Alzheimer's or dementia diagnosis can feel overwhelming—for your loved one and for you. You may leave the doctor's office with more questions than answers. That's completely normal. While there's no one-size-fits-all approach to this journey, having the right information can help you feel more prepared.



MOSAIC

about this

GUIDE

To help you start the conversation, we've compiled a list of essential questions to ask. Consider bringing this guide with you to your next appointment. Write down the answers—or ask if you can record the conversation to review later.

HOW DEMENTIA PROGRESSES

WHAT TO EXPECT

Dementia affects each person differently, and its progression can vary depending on the type. In general, dementia involves a decline in cognitive and functional abilities over time, but the pattern of that decline isn't always the same.

- **Gradual Decline:** Many types of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, follow a slow and steady decline. Memory, language, and thinking abilities gradually worsen, often over the course of several years.
- **Stepped Progression:** Vascular dementia, which is often caused by strokes or small vessel disease, may progress in a more "stepped" pattern. A person may remain stable for a while and then experience a sudden decline.
- **Mixed Dementia:** This is a combination of more than one type of dementia—most commonly Alzheimer's and vascular dementia. The presence of multiple conditions can lead to a more complex and sometimes faster progression.
- **Fluctuating Symptoms:** Some individuals, particularly those with Lewy body dementia or other forms, may have good days and bad days. Periods of clarity and alertness can alternate with moments of confusion and cognitive decline.

Understanding the different ways dementia can progress helps families better understand what they're seeing in their loved one and plan for the support and care they may need at each stage.

QUESTIONS FOR THE DOCTOR

CREATING A CARE PLAN

- What treatments are available to manage symptoms or slow progression?
- What lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, sleep, etc.) might help?
- Are there activities or therapies you recommend to help maintain cognitive function and quality of life?
- Should we consider seeing a specialist, such as a neurologist, geriatrician, or therapist?



HOW DEMENTIA PROGRESSES: WHAT TO EXPECT

QUESTIONS FOR THE DOCTOR

- What specific type of dementia has my loved one been diagnosed with?
- Is there any further testing that is needed to confirm the diagnosis?
- What stage is the disease in?
- What is the expected progression (e.g., what symptoms should we expect now—and in the future)?
- How fast does Alzheimer's/dementia typically progress, and what factors might affect that for my loved one?
- Could anything else be contributing to their memory loss or behavior changes (e.g., medications, depression, vitamin deficiencies)?



STAGES OF DEMENTIA: A GENERAL GUIDE

Dementia progresses differently for everyone, but it's often described in three general stages:

- **Early Stage:** Subtle memory lapses and difficulty with complex tasks may appear. Loved ones might notice changes in personality or problem-solving skills.
- **Middle Stage:** Symptoms become more noticeable. Individuals may struggle with daily activities, get confused in familiar places, and show changes in language or behavior, such as agitation or sundowning.
- **Late Stage:** Significant cognitive and physical decline occurs. Most individuals need full-time care, have trouble communicating, and may lose control of basic functions like eating or toileting.

QUESTIONS FOR THE DOCTOR

PLANNING FOR SAFETY AND DAILY LIVING



Is it safe for my loved one to drive, cook, or live alone right now? ***(Be prepared to answer tough questions in front of your loved one about their memory span, etc. If there's something you're not comfortable discussing in front of your loved one, put it in writing, bring it in, and provide at intake for the doctor's review.)***

What should we watch for in terms of changes in behavior, mobility, or judgment?



What home modifications should we consider?

Are there resources for help with daily care, either now or down the line?

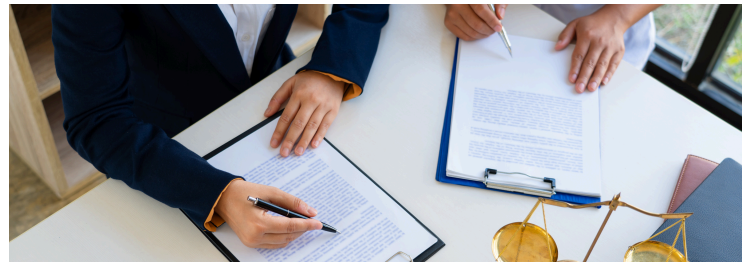


BEYOND THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE: QUESTIONS FOR OTHER PROFESSIONALS

While your doctor is an important source of medical guidance, there are other aspects of care that fall outside their scope. Social workers, care navigators, elder law attorneys, and community organizations can help you navigate the emotional, legal, financial, and long-term care decisions ahead. The following questions are useful to discuss with these experts.

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Should we begin discussing advance directives, powers of attorney, or living wills now?
- What types of professionals should I contact for legal or financial guidance?
- What should we know about long-term care options and insurance coverage?



EMOTIONAL AND FAMILY SUPPORT

- Where can we find support groups or counseling—for caregivers and for our loved one?
- Do you recommend we speak with a social worker, care navigator, or other professional?
- How do we talk to other family members or children about this diagnosis?

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH THE CARE TEAM

- How often should we schedule follow-up appointments?
- What's the best way to reach you if we have questions between visits?
- Can you recommend community resources or organizations that specialize in Alzheimer's care?



YOU'RE NOT ALONE

At Mosaic, we know that caregiving is a journey of the heart. We're here to walk with you, providing trusted information, compassionate support, and a community that understands.

Alzheimer's and dementia may change the path, but with knowledge and love, you can continue to walk it together.



Mosaic Foundation

THANK
YOU!

Mosaic
PO Box 352
Absecon, NJ 08201
office@mosaicgiving.org
mosaicgiving.org
(609) 916-6520

Seashore Gardens Foundation DBA Mosaic is a trusted nonprofit leader in promoting and enhancing services and programs for the elderly. Its mission is to enrich the quality of life for the aged in Southern New Jersey.

Tax ID #56-424727