



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
INDIGENOUS AGING

**10**  
SIGNS

# OF THINKING OR MEMORY CHANGES THAT MIGHT BE DEMENTIA

As we get older, we may slow down a bit.

This is a normal part of aging. Changes in memory or thinking that make it harder to get through the day, are not a normal part of aging. **These may be early signs of dementia.**

Because American Indian and Alaska Native people have a high risk of dementia, it is important to know the warning signs.



## Do you have any of these 10 signs? If so, talk to your doctor.

**01 Memory loss that affects your daily life.** You may:  

- Forget events or important dates
- Repeat yourself
- Rely more often on lists or sticky notes to remember

**02 Trouble planning or solving problems.** You may have a harder time:  

- Paying bills
- Cooking recipes you have used for years

**03 Get confused about the time, date, or where you are.**

**04 Daily tasks are getting harder, including:**  

- Driving
- Making a grocery list or going shopping

**05 Trouble with how your eyesight and thinking work together that gets worse.** This includes:  

- Tripping, falls, or problems with your balance
- Spilling or dropping things more

**06 New trouble talking or writing.**  
You may have a harder time finding the words you want to say. For example, you may say "that thing on your wrist that tells time" instead of "watch."

**07 Lose and cannot find things.** For example, you:  

- Can't find the coffee pot that you use every day
- Might put your car keys in the freezer

**08 Notice changes in mood or personality,** such as being:  

- Easily mad or sad in everyday situations
- More fearful (scared) or suspicious (not trusting)

**09 Act different and make poor choices.** You may:  

- Spend money you do not have or be a scam victim
- Stop washing up regularly or pay less attention to how you look
- Forget to take care of your pet

**10 Pull away from friends and family because it is harder to keep up.**  
You may not want to do things you used to enjoy, like sporting events, church, music, or sex.



American Indian and Alaska Native people have a high risk of dementia.



Big changes in memory or thinking that make it hard to get through the day are not a normal part of aging.



People with one or more of these 10 signs should talk to their doctor to find the cause. It is not always dementia.



**Early dementia diagnosis gives you a chance to get care and plan your future.**



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and ALASKA NATIVE  
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