



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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