

Essential Questions to Ask Your Doctor About a Dementia Diagnosis - Checklist

Receiving a dementia diagnosis can be overwhelming. However, asking the right questions can help you better understand the condition, plan for the future, and get the support you need. This guide covers the most important questions to discuss with your doctor to ensure you're equipped to navigate this new chapter.

How to use this checklist: Check off each question as you ask it, and use the note lines to record important answers and observations.

Understanding the Diagnosis

□ 1. What type of dementia have I been diagnosed with?

Knowing the specific type of dementia is crucial, as it will inform the course of treatment and care plan. Different types of dementia have varying symptoms and prognoses.

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□ 2. What are the potential causes of my dementia?

Understanding the underlying causes can provide valuable insights into the progression of the condition and guide lifestyle changes that may help manage symptoms.

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□ 3. What are the early signs and symptoms I may experience?

Being aware of the typical symptoms associated with the diagnosed type of dementia can help you and your loved ones recognize changes and seek timely support.

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□ **4. How does this diagnosis affect my life expectancy?**

Knowing the potential timeline can help you and your family plan for the future and make informed decisions about treatment, care, and end-of-life arrangements.

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Treatment and Management

☐ 1. What are the available treatment options for my condition?

Exploring the different medications, therapies, and lifestyle interventions can help you and your doctor develop a comprehensive care plan to manage symptoms and maintain quality of life.

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☐ 2. How effective are the available treatments, and what are the potential side effects?

Understanding the pros and cons of each treatment option will empower you to make informed decisions about your care and weigh the risks and benefits.

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☐ 3. Are there any lifestyle changes I can make to help manage my symptoms?

Incorporating non-pharmacological interventions, such as exercise, diet, and cognitive stimulation, can complement medical treatment and help maintain independence for as long as possible.

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□ **4. How often will I need to be monitored, and what type of follow-up care can I expect?**

Knowing the frequency and nature of follow-up appointments will help you plan your care and ensure that any changes in your condition are addressed in a timely manner.

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Navigating Daily Life

□ 1. How will this diagnosis affect my ability to live independently?

Discussing the potential challenges to independent living can help you and your family prepare for necessary changes and adaptations to your home and daily routine.

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□ 2. What kind of support services or resources are available to help me and my family cope with this diagnosis?

Connecting with support groups, community organizations, and professional caregivers can provide valuable emotional, practical, and educational resources to navigate the challenges of living with dementia.

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□ 3. How can I plan for the future and ensure my wishes are respected as the disease progresses?

Discussing advanced care planning, such as living wills, power of attorney, and end-of-life preferences, can give you and your loved ones peace of mind and ensure your values are upheld.

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Caregiver Support

- **1. What kind of assistance and resources are available to help my family members who will be providing care?**

Caregiving can be physically and emotionally demanding, so understanding the support options for your loved ones is crucial to maintaining their well-being and ensuring you receive the care you need.

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- **2. How can I involve my family members in the decision-making process and ensure they understand the course of the disease?**

Keeping your loved ones informed and involved in your care plan can help alleviate stress, facilitate open communication, and ensure everyone is on the same page as the condition progresses.

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Clinical Trials and Research

□ 1. Are there any clinical trials or research studies I may be eligible for?

Participating in research can provide access to the latest treatments and interventions, while also contributing to the advancement of dementia care and understanding.

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□ 2. What are the potential benefits and risks of participating in a clinical trial?

Weighing the pros and cons of clinical trial participation will help you make an informed decision that aligns with your personal goals and values.

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