

Questions to Ask After a Dementia Diagnosis

Also available in Italian | Disponibile anche in italiano

This is a resource for the Italian community. It was developed together with caregivers of people living with dementia within the Italian community in Canada. A caregiver could be a family member, friend, or another person who is supporting a person living with dementia.

This resource provides information about:



Questions to ask your doctor or other healthcare provider following a dementia diagnosis



Some people living with dementia and care partners have said when they were told about the dementia diagnosis, it was hard to take in any other information the doctor shared with them. Others also said they weren't given enough information at that appointment or did not know what questions to ask. Care partners and people living with dementia strongly suggest making a follow-up appointment to ask questions.

We have put together a list of questions you may want to ask your doctor after a dementia diagnosis. Your family doctor may not be able to answer all of your questions. If that is the case, another health or social care provider, such as a nurse practitioner, social worker, or Alzheimer Society support staff might be able to provide more information. You don't need to ask all the questions. There is also space for you to add your own questions.

Questions about my dementia diagnosis

- How certain are you about my diagnosis?
- Will I require a referral to a specialist?
- Do I have a specific type of dementia?
- How does this type of dementia affect my brain?
- What are the common symptoms of this type of dementia?
- What can I expect to happen in the next year, and next 3 years?
- Are my children or grandchildren more likely to get dementia?
- How and what should I tell my family?



Questions about treatments

- What can I do to slow the progression of my symptoms?
- Are there medications that you recommend?
- What are the potential benefits and risks/side effects of these medications?
- Are there resources that can help to manage my medications (for example, blister packs, my pharmacist)?
- Are there changes to my diet and exercise, or other lifestyle changes that you recommend?
- Could an occupational therapist or physiotherapist help me manage changes? If so, could you refer me?



Questions about symptoms and day-to-day activities

- I am having trouble with... _____
(for example, forgetting appointments, sleeping, getting lost, using my phone).
What can I do to manage this?
- Will I need to stop driving? If yes, how will I manage to get around?
- What can I do to continue activities that are important to me, such as... _____
(for example, volunteering, looking after grandchildren, going for walks)?
- What should I consider to keep myself safe in the community?



Questions about care, services, and planning ahead

- Can I bring a family member or friend to our appointments to support me with translation to Italian?
- Can you recommend any dementia support services (for example, support groups, social programs) for me and my care partner? Are you aware of any services that are culturally-specific or available in Italian?
- Who can I speak to about finances and legal matters (for example, power of attorney, financial planning, employment concerns)?
- Who can I speak to if I have concerns about my safety? (for example, quality of care, risk of abuse or neglect)
- How can I access home care services to support my independence at home?
- What conversations should I have with my care partner and family about my future plans and wishes (for example, care preferences, decisions about services and supports)?

