



## Early Signs of Memory Loss

- Determining whether your loved-one has dementia is not easy. After all we all forget things, right? But some signs are better indicators of dementia than others and it is very important to get a diagnosis as soon as possible. Effective early detection can mean increased treatment options and more opportunities for your family to plan for the future. What signs should you be concerned with during your family visit? The following is a list of what to look for, what should hold your attention and what is normal:

### Memory loss that disrupts daily life

- **What does it look like?** Mom forgets plans made last month to gather at your sister's house for New Years.
- **When should I be concerned?** Your loved one is asking for the same information over and over again, and is excessively relying on memory aides such as notes or electronic devices.
- **What's normal?** Sometimes forgetting names or appointments, but remembering them a short time later.

### Changes in planning or solving problems

- **What does it look like?** Mom cannot follow a familiar recipe. Dad cannot keep track of monthly bills.
- **When should I be concerned?** There is a lot of expired food in the pantry or refrigerator, and/or mail is piling up over the course of a couple of months.
- **What's normal?** Making an occasional error when balancing a check book.

Clarendon Adult Day Centers, LLC  
30 – 34 Okner Parkway  
Livingston, NJ 07039  
(973) 369-7147

## Early Signs of Memory Loss

### New problems with words in speaking or writing

- **What does it look like?** Mom has told you that her neighbor's daughter had a baby five times since your arrival yesterday.
- **When should I be concerned?** Your loved one stops in the middle of a conversation, and is unsure of how to continue, is repetitive, has difficulty in finding the right word and calling things by their incorrect names.
- **What's normal?** Your loved one sometimes has trouble finding the right word to complete a thought.

### Decreased or poor judgment

- **What does it look like?** Dad has recently been buying un-needed products from a telemarketer totaling several thousand dollars.
- **When should I worry?** Your loved one is less attentive to personal grooming and cleanliness.
- **What's normal?** Making a bad decision every once in a while.

### Changes in mood or personality

- **What does it look like?** Mom is upset when you ask her about why she no longer goes shopping with her best friends.
- **When to be concerned?** Dad becomes easily upset at home, at work, with friends or in places where he is out of his comfort zone.
- **What's normal?** Developing very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted

### Three Things to Do Right Now

#### 1. See A Doctor

There are many causes of dementia, some of which are reversible. It is important for your physician to get to the specific cause of the problem. Either you or another family member should attend this doctor's visit with your loved one. Be sure to point out specific examples that raised your concern. Finally, trust your instincts. If you still feel uneasy after your initial doctor's evaluation, getting a second opinion may give you peace of mind.

**Clarendon Adult Day Centers, LLC**  
30 – 34 Okner Parkway  
Livingston, NJ 07039  
(973) 369-7147

## Early Signs of Memory Loss

### **2. Educate yourself on different care options**

If the doctor's diagnosis indicates irreversible dementia, then you will need a plan of action as soon as possible. Over time, your loved-one will require different levels and types of care. Initially, you may need assistance with tasks such as shopping, bill-paying, cooking, housekeeping and running errands. Later on, care needs may grow to include assistance with bathing, dressing, personal hygiene and socialization. Understanding what is needed and where to find the best solutions will save time, money and greatly reduce stress.

### **3. Determine your role as caregiver**

Given the nature of dementia, your loved one will need you now more than ever. Since they may not be able to articulate their needs and may even show resistance, you may have to take on the responsibility of determining their needs for them, finding solutions to their issues, and making decisions on their behalf. These new responsibilities can only be accomplished effectively if you are physical, mentally and emotionally strong. Consequently, giving attention to you own health is as important as ever. Finally, remember that there is a great deal of help out there. The most loving thing that you can do is to be honest about what you are capable of and how much you can undertake.

### ***How Clarendon Can Help***

Clarendon Adult Day Center provides initial on-site complimentary consultation with trained nurses and/ or licensed dementia care providers and can help you get started. These professionals can provide guidance on formulating a care plan, and finding ways to access assistance for tasks such as. Since specific needs will change over time, consulting with a trained professional will make sure that your loved one receives the best care, and will save you time and money. You can schedule a consultation by calling Clarendon at (973) 715-5872 to make your appointment.



**Clarendon Adult Day Centers, LLC**  
**30 – 34 Okner Parkway**  
**Livingston, NJ 07039**  
**(973) 369-7147**