

Unique
Senior Care®

Dementia Care

Your essential guide



People, above all else.

What is dementia?

Dementia is a word used to describe a range of conditions that affect how the brain works.

It often causes problems with memory, thinking, language, and how someone manages day-to-day tasks.

These changes can become more noticeable over time and may start to impact everyday life - like forgetting familiar names, getting confused in conversations, or struggling to follow routines.

There are many different types of dementia - more than 100 in total. The most common is Alzheimer's disease, but others include vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, and frontotemporal dementia.

Each one can affect people in slightly different ways.

In the UK, around 944,000 people are living with dementia, and that number is expected to grow as more of us live longer.

Coming to terms with a diagnosis, or even the possibility of dementia, can feel overwhelming. But understanding what it is and how it might change over time can help you feel a bit more prepared for what's ahead.

Whether you're supporting someone close to you or thinking about your own future, having the right information can make a big difference.



The different types of dementia

Dementia is an umbrella term for over 100 different conditions that affect how the brain works. Each type of dementia affects different areas of the brain, leading to different symptoms and challenges.

While no two experiences are exactly the same, understanding the most common types can help you feel more informed and better equipped to support your loved one.

How the brain works and why it matters in dementia

Dementia affects everyone differently, and that's partly because different types of dementia target different parts of the brain.

Each area of the brain plays a specific role - from memory and language to movement and personality - which is why the symptoms can vary so much from person to person.

Understanding this can help make sense of the changes your loved one may be experiencing, whether it's difficulty finding the right words, changes in mood, or problems with coordination.

The diagram below shows what each part of the brain is responsible for.



Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia. It usually starts with memory loss and develops gradually over time.

People may begin to forget recent conversations or familiar names, feel confused in new situations, or struggle with everyday tasks.

It's caused by a build-up of abnormal proteins (amyloid plaques and tau tangles) in the brain that interrupt how cells communicate.

The changes typically begin in the temporal lobe, which plays a key role in memory, before spreading to other areas such as the frontal lobe.

Symptoms: Gradual memory loss, confusion, difficulty recognising familiar faces, behavioural changes, and challenges with daily tasks.

Cause: Abnormal protein build-up in the brain.

Risk factors: Age (typically affecting those over 65), family history, genetics, and lifestyle factors such as poor cardiovascular health.

Care approach

- **Memory-enhancing activities:** Engaging in activities like puzzles or reminiscing to help maintain memory and cognitive function.
- **Structured daily routines:** Creating a consistent schedule to reduce confusion and provide a sense of security.
- **Emotional support:** Make sure both your loved one and you have the emotional support needed to cope with the changes that come with dementia.



Vascular Dementia

Vascular dementia is the second most common type and is caused by reduced blood flow to the brain, often following a stroke or as a result of small vessel disease.

It can affect thinking speed, focus, and decision-making. Some people may notice sudden changes, while for others the symptoms develop more gradually.

The areas of the brain affected can vary depending on where the blood flow is reduced, but the parietal and frontal lobes are often impacted - affecting decision-making, organisation, and problem-solving.

Symptoms: Impaired judgement, difficulties with decision-making, slower thought processes, and problems with focus and organisation.

Cause: Reduced blood flow or strokes causing brain damage.

Risk factors: High blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, heart disease, and previous strokes.

Care approach

- **Support with daily activities:** Assistance with bathing, dressing, and meal preparation to maintain independence.
- **Vascular health management:** Monitor and manage cardiovascular health to prevent further decline.
- **Focus on comfort:** Ensure comfort and quality of life through a consistent care approach.



Dementia with Lewy Bodies

Lewy body dementia shares similarities with both Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. It's characterised by abnormal protein deposits known as Lewy bodies, which affect brain chemicals.

It can cause changes in movement, visual hallucinations, and variations in alertness - sometimes being quite lucid one moment and very confused the next.

This condition typically affects several parts of the brain at once, including the frontal, temporal, and parietal lobes, which influence memory, movement, and perception.

Symptoms: Hallucinations, movement problems similar to Parkinson's, sleep disturbances, and fluctuating alertness or confusion.

Cause: Protein deposits (Lewy bodies) disrupt brain chemicals, affecting cognition and motor functions.

Risk factors: Age (usually over 50), family history, and possibly other neurological conditions like Parkinson's.

Care approach

- **Consistent routines:** Engage in activities like music therapy or gentle exercise to reduce anxiety.
- **Daily living assistance:** Provide practical help with tasks like dressing and mobility to ensure safety and comfort.



Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD)

FTD tends to affect younger people, often between the ages of 40 and 65. It primarily affects the frontal and temporal lobes, which control personality, language, and behaviour.

You may notice changes in how someone speaks, behaves, or interacts with others, sometimes before memory is affected.

Symptoms: Marked personality changes, impulsive behaviours, language difficulties, and a lack of empathy or social awareness.

Cause: Degeneration in parts of the brain responsible for personality, behaviour, and language.

Risk factors: Family history, genetic mutations, typically affects individuals between 40 and 65.

Care approach

- **Personalised behavioural support:** Use tailored approaches to manage impulsive behaviours and support emotional wellbeing.
- **Structured environment:** Create a stable environment that supports communication needs and helps maintain a sense of routine.
- **Maintaining dignity:** Ensure all care respects the individual's dignity and promotes comfort.



Other types of Dementia

While Alzheimer's, vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, and frontotemporal dementia are the most well-known, there are other forms that some families may come across.

These can bring a different set of challenges and often require a more tailored approach to care.

Mixed Dementia

This means a person is living with more than one type of dementia at the same time - often Alzheimer's disease alongside vascular dementia.

It can lead to a mix of symptoms, and support usually needs to be carefully adapted to suit the individual's needs.

Parkinson's Disease Dementia

For some people with Parkinson's, changes in thinking and memory can develop as the condition progresses.

This is known as Parkinson's disease dementia and may be accompanied by movement difficulties, making everyday tasks more challenging.

Huntington's Disease

Huntington's is a rare inherited condition that can cause changes in movement, mood, and memory.

Dementia symptoms may appear as the disease advances, and care often needs to be highly specialised and flexible.

Recognising the early signs of dementia



People, above all else.

The early signs of dementia can be subtle and are sometimes mistaken for normal ageing. But spotting these changes and seeking advice early can make a real difference.

It can help your loved one stay independent for longer and give you both time to plan and access the right support.

While every person's experience is different, some of the more common early signs include:

Memory loss affecting daily activities:

Forgetting important tasks, such as appointments or paying bills, making daily routines more challenging.

Difficulty planning or solving problems:

Finding certain tasks more challenging than before, such as following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly expenses.

Confusion about time or place:

Losing track of dates, seasons, or the passage of time, which can create feelings of disorientation or unease.

Trouble understanding visual images:

Challenges with reading, judging distance, or recognising familiar objects.

Withdrawing from social or work activities:

activities, or projects that were once enjoyable because they may feel these activities have become more challenging.

These changes can be upsetting to notice, but recognising them early gives you the chance to explore what's happening and put helpful steps in place.

If you're concerned about yourself or someone you care for, speak to a GP. They can assess the situation and, if needed, refer you for further support or diagnosis.

An early diagnosis doesn't change the outcome, but it does mean more time to adjust, plan for the future, and get the right support in place at the right time.

Understanding the stages of Dementia

Once early signs begin to appear and you have a diagnosis, many families start to wonder what might come next. While no two experiences are exactly the same, understanding how dementia can change over time can help you feel more prepared and supported.

Dementia is often described as progressing through seven stages. These stages don't follow a strict timeline, but they offer a useful way to understand how someone's needs may change and when extra help might be needed. The type of dementia, the person's overall health, and their environment can all influence how symptoms develop.

The 7 stages of dementia (A visual summary of how dementia progresses.)

- 1 **No Symptoms** No noticeable memory loss or cognitive difficulties
- 2 **Very Mild Changes** Minor forgetfulness – usually not obvious to others
- 3 **Mild Decline** Early signs like struggling to recall names or manage tasks
- 4 **Moderate Decline** Noticeable memory lapses and difficulty with daily planning
- 5 **Moderate Severe Decline** Needs help with everyday tasks and may forget personal details
- 6 **Severe Decline** Increased confusion and significant support needed with daily care
- 7 **Very Severe Decline** Loss of communication, mobility and awareness – 24/7 support is typically required

Early-Stage Dementia

(At this stage, changes are subtle and daily life remains mostly independent.)

The early stage of dementia is often subtle and easy to dismiss. Forgetting names, misplacing everyday items, or struggling to find the right words can feel frustrating but don't necessarily stop someone from living independently.

While these changes are mild, this is an important time to put plans in place. Seeking a diagnosis, having open conversations with loved ones, and making small adjustments - like setting reminders and keeping mentally and socially active - can help maintain independence for as long as possible.

Stage 1

No Cognitive Decline or memory loss

In the first stage of dementia, there are no noticeable symptoms of dementia, and a person continues to function as they always have. Memory, reasoning, and awareness remain intact, with no apparent signs of dementia.

However, while no care is needed at this stage, adopting a brain-healthy lifestyle can be beneficial. Regular physical activity, a well-balanced diet, and engaging in mentally stimulating activities - such as reading, puzzles, or socialising - can help maintain cognitive function for as long as possible.

Stage 2

Very Mild Cognitive Decline

At this stage, subtle memory lapses may begin to appear, such as misplacing objects or occasionally forgetting words during conversations. These changes are often mild and can be mistaken for normal ageing.

While no immediate care is required, it may be helpful to start tracking symptoms and seeking medical advice if concerns arise. An early medical assessment can rule out other potential causes of memory issues, such as stress, vitamin deficiencies, or medication side effects.

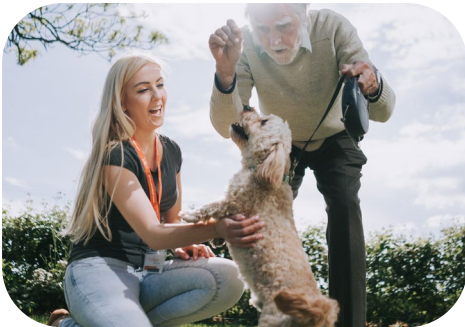
Introducing simple organisational strategies, such as keeping a calendar, using reminder notes, or setting up structured routines, can also help in maintaining independence for longer.

Stage 3

Mild Cognitive Decline and dementia symptoms

This is the stage where memory issues and cognitive changes become more noticeable. The person may start to forget appointments, struggle to find the right words in conversations, or have difficulty with problem-solving and decision-making. Complex tasks, such as managing finances or following detailed instructions, may feel more challenging. At this point, loved ones may start to notice changes, which can lead to frustration or anxiety for the person experiencing symptoms. While individuals can still live independently, this is an important time to start planning for the future. Seeking a medical evaluation now can help determine whether symptoms are due to dementia or another condition.

An early dementia diagnosis allows individuals to take an active role in planning their future care, discussing treatment options, and putting legal and financial affairs in order while they are still able to make informed decisions.



Mid-Stage Dementia

(At this stage, daily life becomes more challenging, and support is often needed.)

As the progression of dementia moves into the middle stage, everyday life becomes noticeably more difficult. Memory loss worsens, making tasks like cooking, handling finances, and keeping track of time increasingly challenging. Confusion, frustration, and mood swings can become more frequent, and it's often at this stage that family members take on a greater role in providing support.

For many, this is the time to explore care options. While living at home is still possible, extra help - whether from family or professional Caregivers - can ease daily struggles. Structured routines, gentle reminders, and familiar surroundings can provide much-needed reassurance, helping individuals feel more secure and supported as their condition progresses.

Stage 4

Moderate Cognitive Decline

At this stage, memory loss becomes more noticeable, and the person living with dementia may require more time and effort to complete daily tasks.

They might forget recent conversations, struggle to recall personal details, or feel disoriented in familiar places.

Emotional and behavioural changes, such as increased frustration, irritability, or withdrawal from social activities, can also develop.

This stage is when routines become especially important. Structured daily activities, gentle prompts, and reassurance can help individuals maintain a sense of control. Families often start to provide more hands-on assistance, and many begin exploring professional dementia support to help with daily life and long-term care planning.

Stage 5

Moderately Severe Cognitive Impairment

By this stage, memory loss is more pronounced, and individuals may forget important personal details, such as their address or close family members' names. Confusion about time and place is common, and they may need help with fundamental tasks like dressing, cooking, and managing medication.

Difficulties in communication, mood swings, and behavioural changes - such as increased anxiety or agitation - can become more apparent.

Supervision and assistance are often required throughout the day to ensure safety and well-being.

Many families turn to professional dementia care services to provide consistent support, reduce stress, and maintain their loved one's quality of life.

Late-Stage Dementia

(At this stage, memory loss is profound, and full-time care is essential.)

In the late stage of dementia, individuals lose much of their independence and require round-the-clock support. Memory loss becomes severe, and they may no longer recognise loved ones or their surroundings. Communication is extremely limited, and mobility often declines, making daily tasks like eating, dressing, and personal care impossible without assistance.

Providing care at this stage is about ensuring comfort, dignity, and a sense of calm. Specialist dementia care can help manage physical health needs while maintaining emotional well-being. Creating a familiar, soothing environment and focusing on quality of life becomes the priority for families and Caregivers.

Stage 6

Severe Cognitive Decline

At this stage, severe dementia profoundly impacts daily life. Individuals may no longer recognise loved ones and require around-the-clock care for all aspects of personal care, including dressing, eating, and hygiene.

Communication becomes extremely difficult, and they may struggle to express their needs verbally. Mobility issues also worsen, increasing the risk of falls and other physical health complications.

Care during this stage prioritises comfort, reassurance, and maintaining dignity. A calm and familiar environment can help reduce distress, while non-verbal communication - such as gentle touch, facial expressions, and a soothing tone - becomes increasingly important.

Specialist dementia Caregivers play a vital role in ensuring individuals feel safe, respected, and well cared for during this stage.

Stage 7

Very Severe Cognitive Decline

In the final stage of dementia, individuals become completely dependent on others for their care.

They may no longer recognise familiar faces, respond to their surroundings, or communicate verbally. Eating and swallowing become increasingly difficult, and their physical health declines, often leading to more time spent resting or sleeping.

Care at this stage is about ensuring dignity, comfort, and emotional connection. Gentle touch, soothing music, and a calm presence can provide reassurance even when words are no longer understood.

Palliative care is essential in managing pain and ensuring individuals remain as comfortable as possible, offering both practical and emotional support to families during this difficult time.

Professional support through every stage

Dementia affects everyone differently, and the right care at the right time can make a world of difference.

From offering gentle reminders in the early stages to providing full-time support in the later stages, our trained Caregivers understand the complexities of dementia and are there to help at.

Our Caregivers receive specialist training in dementia care, equipping them with the skills to support individuals with patience, reassurance, and expertise. They use structured routines, redirection techniques, and familiar surroundings to reduce anxiety and help individuals feel secure

We provide:

Personalised care at every stage:

Whether it's gentle encouragement in the early stages, prompting for daily tasks in the middle stages, or full assistance when needed, our care adapts to each individual.

Expert communication techniques:

Caregivers are trained to recognise non-verbal cues, respond with empathy, and use techniques like validation therapy and reminiscence to ease distress and maintain engagement.

Support with daily life:

From personal care and mobility assistance to meal preparation and meaningful activities that promote cognitive function, our Caregivers help individuals maintain their dignity and quality of life.

Specialist strategies for managing symptoms:

We support individuals through sensory changes, night-time restlessness, and behavioural challenges, using techniques tailored to their needs.

Emotional support for families:

Navigating dementia can be overwhelming, and we provide families with guidance, reassurance, and practical support as their loved one's condition evolves.

With expert dementia care, we help individuals maintain a sense of identity, independence, and comfort, while giving families peace of mind knowing their loved one is in safe and compassionate hands.

How live-in care gave Rita the support she needed

When Julie's mum, Rita, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, her condition gradually made everyday life more difficult.

She struggled to keep track of conversations, became easily overwhelmed in busy environments, and needed increasing support with daily tasks.

When she moved into a care home, these challenges only grew - she found it hard to settle, became withdrawn, and stopped eating and sleeping properly.

The unfamiliar setting and the presence of so many people made it difficult for her to focus, leading to distress and confusion.

Recognising that she needed more personalised care, Julie made the decision to bring her home with live-in support.

The difference was immediate - Rita became more settled, her appetite returned, and she was able to sleep through the night again.

Having a carer who understands her condition has helped her feel calmer and more in control. For Julie, the biggest relief has been knowing her mum is in safe hands, receiving the one-to-one care she needs in a familiar, comforting environment.



Speak to our expert care team about getting the right care in place

Get Started with Your Care Assessment

[Get started here](#)

How to support someone with dementia

Living with dementia or caring for someone who has been diagnosed isn't something anyone plans for, but it's a reality that many people face. If you or someone you love has recently been diagnosed, it's natural to feel uncertain about what lies ahead. You might be wondering how to adjust to new challenges or find ways to maintain quality of life.

What's important to know is that you're not alone. There are practical steps, helpful tools, and supportive communities that can make this journey more manageable. While there will undoubtedly be tough days, with the right strategies in place, daily life can remain calm and manageable.

Below are some simple, practical tips - whether you're caring for a loved one or living with dementia yourself.

If you're caring for someone with dementia

- Keep a consistent routine:**
Repeating daily activities at the same time each day helps reduce confusion and create a sense of safety.
- Use visual cues:** Labels on cupboards, written reminders, and photos can support memory and help your loved one navigate their day more independently.
- Communicate clearly and calmly:**
Speak slowly, use short sentences, and allow extra time for responses. A gentle tone and body language can go a long way in creating a supportive environment.
- Break tasks into smaller steps:**
Help your loved one feel more confident by guiding them through one step at a time, rather than offering broad instructions.
- Encourage involvement in familiar tasks:** Including your loved one in simple activities like folding laundry, gardening, or laying the table can bring purpose and reassurance.
- Create a calm environment:**
Reduce noise and visual distractions where possible, especially if they seem to cause agitation. Soft lighting, familiar objects, and a quiet atmosphere can help.
- Ask for support when you need it:**
Talk to family, friends, or professional services when things feel overwhelming. You're not expected to do everything on your own.

If you're living with dementia

- Stick to a routine that works for you**
 Having structure in your day can help you feel more settled and in control. Try keeping regular times for meals, rest, and daily tasks.
- Use reminders and tools to stay organised**
 Calendars, to-do lists, and alarms can help you remember appointments, take medication, or keep track of important tasks.
- Be kind to yourself**
 If something feels difficult, it's okay to take a break or ask for help. You're doing your best, and small changes can make things easier.
- Tell others what you need**
 If you need someone to speak more slowly or repeat something, let them know. Most people want to help - you just need to guide them a little.
- Keep doing things you enjoy**
 Whether it's music, walking, cooking, or chatting with a friend, spending time on familiar activities can bring comfort and joy.
- Stay connected**
 Talking to someone you trust or joining a support group can help you feel less alone and give you space to share your experience.



Everyone's experience with dementia is different, but there are simple tools and everyday strategies that can make life feel more manageable, whether you're living with dementia or supporting someone who is.

These adjustments don't have to be complicated. Often, small changes can help reduce stress, build confidence, and support a sense of independence and comfort.

Everyday technology

These adjustments don't have to be complicated. Often, small changes can help reduce stress, build confidence, and support a sense of independence and comfort.

- **Reminder apps** can prompt you or your loved one about medication, appointments, or routines.
- **Digital clocks and calendars** with large displays can help with orientation by clearly showing the day, date, and time.
- **GPS location devices** can offer peace of mind if someone is at risk of becoming disoriented when out and about.
- **Voice assistants** like Alexa or Google Home can be used to set reminders, play music, or answer simple questions.

Comfort through familiar sights, sounds, and smells

Sensory support can help create a calming environment, especially during moments of confusion or distress.

- Music can lift mood, reduce agitation, and offer comfort. Listening together or singing along can also be a lovely way to connect.
- Comfort objects like soft cushions or treasured belongings can bring reassurance.
- Familiar scents such as lavender, citrus, or baking can help relax and soothe.
- Warm, soft lighting in the evening can make a space feel more peaceful.

It's worth trying a few things to find what feels most comforting for you or your loved one.

Making the home feel safer and familiar

Adjusting your environment can make a big difference in helping someone feel confident and secure.

- Use labels on cupboards and doors to help identify rooms or items more easily.
- Keep lighting bright and consistent to reduce shadows, which can sometimes be confusing.
- Clear walkways and remove clutter to make moving around the home easier and safer.
- Use contrasting colours to help important items like plates, cups, or bathroom fixtures stand out.

Small changes like these can help reduce frustration and support day-to-day independence.

Simple, meaningful activities

Taking part in everyday tasks can bring structure, enjoyment, and a sense of purpose. These don't need to be complicated - what matters is that they feel comfortable and achievable.

Some ideas include:

- Folding laundry or helping set the table
- Gentle gardening or watering plants
- Looking through photo albums or keepsakes
- Listening to favourite music
- Doing puzzles, crafts, colouring or baking
- Preparing meals with support as needed

Whether done together or independently, these small moments can help create a sense of routine and connection.

Managing emotional wellbeing and behavioural changes

Dementia can affect how someone feels and behaves, often in ways that seem sudden or difficult to understand. You might notice your loved one becoming more anxious, withdrawn, tearful, agitated, or frustrated. These changes are often caused by confusion, tiredness, or difficulty processing what's happening around them - not by anything you've done wrong.

While these moments can be emotionally tough, there are ways to respond that can help your loved one feel more settled and secure.

Recognising feelings of loss:

As dementia progresses, it's natural to feel a sense of loss - even while your loved one is still with you. This might include grief for the relationship you once had, or sadness about the changes in their abilities and personality. These feelings are common and valid. Reflecting on happy memories together or simply enjoying quiet time side by side can help you stay connected.

Staying connected through small moments:

When words become harder to find, emotional closeness still matters. Looking through photos, listening to music, or just holding hands can help maintain a sense of togetherness. Even a shared cup of tea or familiar routine can provide comfort and reassurance.



Using reminiscence to connection:

Talking about the past can feel easier than focusing on the present. Using photos, music, old recipes or keepsakes can encourage your loved one to open up and engage. The goal isn't to test their memory - but to offer a positive, shared moment.

Managing mood swings, agitation or anxiety:

Dementia can cause behaviour that feels out of character - restlessness, repeated questions, irritability or even anger. These behaviours are usually a response to confusion, discomfort, or fear. Try to stay calm, avoid correcting them, and respond with reassurance. A soft tone, familiar environment, or distraction with a comforting activity often helps.



Tips that may help in difficult moments

- Gently redirect their attention to something calming, like music, folding laundry, or looking through a photo book
- Keep your body language open and your voice steady, even if you're feeling stressed
- Avoid arguing or pointing out what's incorrect - what feels real to them in that moment is real
- Step away briefly if you need to reset, then return with a calm presence

If behaviour becomes aggressive or unsafe

While many changes can be managed at home, there may be times when behaviour escalates into physical aggression. This can be deeply upsetting and it's important to know that you don't have to manage this alone or put yourself at risk.

If you ever feel unsafe:

- Speak to your GP, care provider or social worker. They can carry out a risk assessment and review care options or medication.
- Contact the Dementia UK Admiral Nurse Helpline on 0800 888 6678 for expert guidance.
- Reach out to Carers UK or your local carers' organisation for advice and support.
- If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Prioritising your own safety and wellbeing is not a sign of failure. Support is available, and you deserve to feel safe and supported as a Caregiver.

Understand sundowning and how to help ease evening restlessness

Many people living with dementia become more confused, restless or anxious in the late afternoon or evening. This is often referred to as sundowning, and while it doesn't affect everyone, it's fairly common - thought to impact around 20–30% of people with dementia in the UK.

You might notice signs like pacing, irritability, or emotional distress at the same time each day. Understanding what's behind these behaviours can help you create a calmer, more reassuring end to the day.

Common causes:

- **Fatigue:**
As the day goes on, your loved one may become tired, making it harder to process their surroundings and emotions.
- **Disrupted body clock:**
Dementia can affect a person's internal clock, making it harder to distinguish between day and night.
- **Lighting and environment:**
As daylight fades and shadows lengthen, the environment can become more disorienting. This is especially true during autumn and winter, when shorter days can make it feel darker earlier in the day. Noise or unfamiliar surroundings can also add to the sense of unease.

What can help

- **Keep a regular daily routine:**
Familiar patterns can reduce anxiety and make evenings more predictable.
- **Use lighting to reduce confusion:**
Switch on lamps before it gets dark and consider daylight or SAD lamps in the afternoon to mimic natural light and reduce shadows.
- **Create a calm, quiet space:**
Lower noise levels, avoid overstimulating TV or activities, and use soft lighting or comforting objects to set a soothing tone.
- **Encourage activity earlier in the day:**
Gentle movement like a short walk or household task can reduce restlessness in the evening.
- **Offer reassurance:**
If your loved one becomes unsettled, a familiar voice, a warm drink or just sitting quietly with them can offer calm and comfort.

Looking after yourself as a Caregiver



People, above all else.

Caring for someone with dementia can be incredibly meaningful but it can also be physically and emotionally demanding.

Taking care of yourself isn't selfish - it's essential. When you're rested, supported, and emotionally well, you're in a better position to care for your loved one and respond to challenges with patience and compassion.

Recognising the signs of burnout

It's not always obvious when you're burning out. Many caregivers keep going until they feel completely overwhelmed. Look out for signs like:

- Constant tiredness or trouble sleeping
- Irritability, anxiety, or low mood
- Feeling emotionally distant from your loved one
- Physical symptoms like headaches or frequent illness
- A sense that you're "running on empty"

If you're experiencing any of these, it's a sign you may need more rest, support, or space to focus on your own wellbeing.



Exploring respite care options

- **In-home respite:**

A professional caregiver visits your home, offering support while you take some time away.

- **Day centres:**

Local services where your loved one can spend time in a safe and social setting during the day.

- **Residential respite:**

A short stay in a care home or live-in setting, offering full-time support for a set period.

To find out what's available in your area, speak to your GP, local authority, or a trusted care provider. You may also be eligible for funded support depending on your circumstances.

Why regular breaks matter

Even short breaks can help reset your energy and allow you to return to caregiving with more clarity and calm. Whether it's a quiet walk, a chat with a friend, or time spent on something you enjoy, regular time away from caring responsibilities gives your mind and body the space to recover.

For longer breaks, respite care can provide peace of mind that your loved one is still receiving personalised care - while giving you valuable time to rest or catch up on your own needs.

Building a support network

You don't have to do this alone. Connecting with others who understand what you're going through can bring relief, perspective, and encouragement.

- **Talk to family and friends:**
Let them know what you need; even small offers of help can make a big difference.
- **Join a local support group:**
Many communities offer regular meetups for carers, often supported by organisations like Age UK or the Alzheimer's Society.
- **Reach out to national helplines and online forums:**
Carers UK, Dementia UK, and Alzheimer's Society all provide trusted resources and helplines.
- **Attend a Memory Café:**
These offer a welcoming space for both people living with dementia and their carers, with emotional support and practical advice. For example, our memory cafés in Dorridge and Leamington Spa both run every Tuesday and offer a lifeline for local people dealing with memory loss.

A reminder to be kind to yourself

Caring for someone you love can come with big emotions - guilt, grief, frustration, pride, and everything in between. Give yourself permission to rest when you need it, ask for help when it's needed, and recognise the care you give every day.

Support is out there, and you deserve it just as much as your loved one does.

Finding the right support

Caring for someone with dementia is a big responsibility - but you don't have to navigate it on your own. There is a wide network of support available, from healthcare professionals and local services to national charities and community organisations.

Knowing what's available and how to access it can make all the difference in helping you feel more confident and supported.

Professional support

GPs and memory clinics

Your GP is a key starting point for any concerns about memory loss or behaviour changes.

They can:

- Carry out an initial assessment.
- Refer your loved one to a memory clinic or specialist team.
- Support with ongoing health conditions and offer advice on care planning.
- Signpost local services that can help you both.

Admiral Nurses

GPs and memory clinics

These are specialist dementia nurses provided through Dementia UK. They work closely with families, offering expert guidance on everything from communication strategies to complex care decisions:

Call **0800 888 6678** to speak to an Admiral Nurse through the Dementia UK helpline.

Occupational therapists

An OT can suggest home adaptations, tools and techniques to make everyday tasks easier and support your loved one's independence.

Social prescribers

Often based in GP surgeries, social prescribers connect families with local non-medical support - like dementia-friendly activities, transport services, or emotional wellbeing support.

Social care providers

Professional carers can offer anything from occasional help with daily tasks to round-the-clock support. This can ease pressure on family carers and give your loved one the benefit of trained, compassionate care at home.

Community and charity resources

National organisations

These charities provide free, trusted information and services to people affected by dementia:

- **Alzheimer's Society:**
Advice, guides, support workers and local services.
- **Dementia UK:**
Specialist support via Admiral Nurses.
- **Age UK:**
Advice on day-to-day living, care options, and financial support.
- **Carers UK:**
Dedicated support for unpaid carers, including legal and benefits advice.

Support groups and social connection

- **Memory cafés:**
Local drop-ins offering support, conversation, and activities in a welcoming setting. For example, we have two memory cafés in Dorridge and Leamington Spa that take place every Tuesday. They're open to both people living with dementia and their carers and offer practical advice and emotional support.
- **Peer support and befriending:**
Many organisations offer regular phone calls or visits for companionship and emotional connection.
- **Carer support groups:**
Run in-person or online, these allow carers to share experiences and find encouragement in a non-judgemental space.

Helplines and emotional support

- **Dementia UK Helpline:**
0800 888 6678
www.dementiauk.org
- **Alzheimer's Society Dementia Connect:**
0333 150 3456
www.alzheimers.org.uk
- **Carers UK Helpline:**
0800 055 6112
www.carersuk.org
- **Age UK Advice Line:**
0800 888 6678
www.ageuk.org.uk
- **Silver Line (friendship and advice):**
0800 888 6678
www.thesilverline.org.uk
- **Mind Helpline (mental health support):**
0300 123 3393
www.mind.org.uk

There is no shame in asking for help

Support exists for a reason - because caring can be tough, and no one should have to do it all on their own. Whether you're ready to speak to someone today or just beginning to explore what's out there, take it one step at a time.

Even small changes can lighten the load and make daily life feel more manageable for both you and your loved one.

How home care can support your loved one

Living with dementia can bring many changes - not just for the person affected, but for their family too. We understand how important it is for your loved one to stay in their own home, surrounded by familiar people, routines, and comforts.

That's why our dementia home care is designed around the individual. Each care plan is shaped by their needs, preferences, and personality, with support that adapts as things change over time.

Having one-to-one support at home means your loved one can continue living as independently as possible, with help where it's needed. Our trained caregivers provide consistent, compassionate support that brings reassurance to both the person receiving care and their family.

Watch our dementia support video series

It's not always easy to know how to respond when your loved one is confused, distressed, or asking questions that are hard to answer. To help with this, we've created a series of short videos offering gentle, practical guidance for some of the everyday situations families often face.

Each one is led by a dementia care expert and includes down-to-earth advice you can use at home - whether you're supporting someone who's asking to go home, struggling with personal care, or even handling things like changes in vision.



Click here for our YouTube playlist: [Caring for a loved one with dementia](#)

What dementia home care can include

- **Support with daily routines:** such as washing, dressing, toileting, and preparing meals, delivered with dignity and respect.
- **Managing medication:** gentle reminders or practical help to ensure medication is taken safely and on time.
- **Mobility and safety:** including help with moving around the home, preventing falls, and ensuring the environment is safe and accessible.
- **Companionship and emotional support:** whether it's sharing stories, going for a walk, or simply having someone there to talk to.
- **Cognitive stimulation:** gentle, tailored activities that help keep the mind engaged, such as puzzles, memory games, or music.
- **Household help:** like laundry, light cleaning, or grocery prep, to keep things running smoothly day to day.

For many families, having trusted care in place offers not just practical help but also a sense of relief. Knowing someone is there who understands dementia and provides kind, dependable care can make daily life feel more manageable for everyone involved.



Philip's story: The benefits of early care planning

When someone is diagnosed with dementia, it's natural to focus on the here and now.

Planning for care might feel like something for later, but Philip's story shows how getting support in place early can make life feel more manageable and less overwhelming.

Philip was diagnosed with vascular dementia around two years ago. While he didn't need full-time care straight away, he knew it made sense to think ahead.

He got some advice to find a caregiver who understood his situation and decided to bring someone into his life early on.

That someone was Chris, a Field Care Supervisor from our Warwickshire team. Chris helps with the practical side of things, but more than that, he's become a good friend.

They spend time in the garden, go for walks, and enjoy the small everyday moments that help life feel familiar and enjoyable. Having Chris around has also given Philip's wife some much-needed breathing space and time to herself.

For Philip, it's brought reassurance. Knowing there's already support in place means less worry about what might happen in the future. As he put it, there's an "element of relief" in having someone by his side who understands him and can grow with him as his needs change.



Interested in seeing how we can help?

Get Started with Your Care Assessment

[Get started here](#)

The benefits of dementia care at home

Choosing dementia care at home can help your loved one stay in a familiar, reassuring environment. Some of the key benefits include:

- Comfort and familiarity:**
 Staying at home reduces confusion and anxiety by keeping routines, surroundings and relationships consistent.
- One-to-one support:**
 Care is entirely focused on the individual, allowing for a more tailored and flexible approach that can evolve over time.
- Greater independence:**
 With support designed around your loved one's needs and abilities, they can continue doing the things they enjoy for as long as possible.
- Stronger relationships:**
 Regular contact with the same caregiver helps build trust and connection, which can be especially important for someone living with dementia.
- Family involvement:**
 Home care helps families stay actively involved, offering regular updates and reassurance while giving loved ones the chance to take a break when needed.



Funding and financial support for dementia care

When you begin exploring care options, one of the biggest questions is how it will be funded.

While every situation is different, there are several routes that may help, including government benefits, local authority support, and NHS funding. Here's an overview of what might be available:

Local authority funding

Your local council may be able to help with the cost of care, depending on your loved one's needs and financial situation.

- A care needs assessment will look at what support is required.
- A financial assessment (means test) will determine whether your loved one is eligible for funding support.
- If they have savings below £23,250 (England), they may qualify for help with care at home, respite care, equipment, or home adaptations.

You can request an assessment through your local adult social care team.

NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC)

Some people with more complex or severe health needs may be eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare - a package of care that is fully funded by the NHS.

- It is not means-tested, so it's based purely on care needs.
- Eligibility is determined through a formal assessment process involving healthcare professionals.
- It can cover full-time care at home or in a care home.

While not everyone with dementia qualifies, it is worth asking your GP or social care team about if needs have become more complex.

Private funding and future planning

If you're funding care yourself, there are still ways to make the process smoother:

- Personal savings, pensions or investments can be used directly or through financial products such as equity release.
- Independent financial advisers with experience in long-term care planning can help you understand your options.
- Legal tools such as a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) ensure someone trusted can manage decisions if needed in future.
- Advance care plans can record your loved one's wishes clearly, helping everyone feel more confident and prepared.

Government benefits

There are a few non-means-tested benefits that can help with the cost of living and caring for someone with dementia:

- **Attendance Allowance:**
For people over State Pension age who need support due to a disability or health condition like dementia.
- **Personal Independence Payment (PIP):**
For people under State Pension age who need help with daily living or mobility.
- **Carer's Allowance:**
For unpaid carers who provide at least 35 hours of care per week and meet certain eligibility criteria.

These benefits can help ease financial pressure and give families more flexibility in how support is arranged.

What happens next?

If you're living with dementia, or supporting someone who is, it's natural to feel unsure about what to do next. Making decisions about care can be emotional and sometimes overwhelming, but you don't have to do it alone.

At Unique Senior Care, we've supported many people to take the first step towards getting the right help at home. Whether you're simply looking for advice or feel ready to explore care options, we'll guide you through it, gently and at your own pace.

What the process looks like

1. A friendly chat

You can give us a call or request a callback. We'll take time to understand your situation and talk through the kind of support that might help, without any pressure or obligation.

2. A free home visit

If you'd like to explore things further, one of our team can visit you at home. This gives us a chance to learn more about your routines, needs and what's important to you.

3. A care plan tailored to you

We'll create a personalised plan that fits in with your lifestyle. It can be adjusted over time if things change, and we'll always involve you in those decisions.

4. Meeting your Caregiver

We match you with a carefully chosen Caregiver who has the right experience and a personality that fits well with yours. The focus is on comfort, trust and building a good relationship.

5. Ongoing support

Once care begins, you'll have a dedicated Care Manager who checks in regularly and is always there if you have questions or need to make changes.

If you're not sure whether it's the right time for care, that's okay. Even a small amount of help can make daily life feel more manageable, whether that's support with everyday tasks, someone to chat with, or more hands-on care.

We're here whenever you're ready.

[Click here to speak with our team or request a call back.](#)

Dementia care FAQs

What is the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term that describes a range of symptoms linked to memory loss, confusion, and difficulty with thinking or communication.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, but there are many other types, including vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia and frontotemporal dementia. Each one affects the brain differently and may require different approaches to care.

Can dementia be cured?

There is currently no cure for dementia. That can be hard to hear, but there are treatments and approaches that can help manage symptoms, improve comfort, and support quality of life. Early diagnosis and the right care can make a meaningful difference.

How do I know if I need extra support?

You might notice that daily tasks are becoming more difficult, or that you're feeling increasingly anxious, disoriented, or overwhelmed. If you're supporting someone with dementia, you may be worried about their safety or struggling to balance everything on your own. If any of this feels familiar, it could be time to explore care options - even a small amount of help can provide relief.

When should I consider professional dementia care?

There's no right or wrong time, but signs that professional support might help include difficulties with personal care, changes in behaviour or mood, increased confusion, or concerns about safety at home. If you or your loved one are becoming more isolated or the care needs are becoming too much to manage alone, getting support early can make all the difference.

What support is available for families and carers?

You're not expected to do it all alone. Support is available through care providers, memory cafés, charities like Dementia UK and Alzheimer's Society, and local groups. These offer advice, emotional support, and time out through respite care. Many people find that speaking to others in similar situations can also bring comfort and reassurance.

Can someone with dementia stay at home?

Yes, many people with dementia continue to live at home with the right support in place. Home care services can provide help with daily tasks, medication, companionship and more. Familiar surroundings often help reduce confusion and anxiety, which is why staying at home is often preferred.

Is dementia care personalised to the individual?

It should be. At Unique Senior Care, every care plan is tailored to the person's needs, preferences and routines. As dementia progresses, we adapt the support so it continues to feel right for both the individual and their family.

How can I pay for dementia care?

There are several funding options, including Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Carer's Allowance, and support from your local authority or the NHS (such as Continuing Healthcare funding).

Will I always have the same Caregiver?

Consistency is really important, especially for someone living with dementia. We aim to match you with a small, dedicated team who get to know you well and can build a sense of trust and routine over time.

Where can I go for more advice or support?

You can contact our team for a friendly, no-obligation chat. We're here to listen and help you explore what might work best. You can also find excellent information and support through organisations like Dementia UK, Alzheimer's Society, and Age UK.

Dementia Care

Your essential guide

Talk with our care experts today

We are here 7 days a week to help you find the perfect care solution for your loved one. Let's start the conversation today.

0808 134 1124
enquiries@uniquecare.co.uk

uniquecare.co.uk



Find out more about how our expert dementia care can help you live well at home.

Unique
Senior Care®

People, above all else.