



Memory Problems

Information for patients

This leaflet contains information about memory problems. It will also provide you with information about the next steps you'll need to take in your assessment.

Why have I been given this leaflet?

- During your hospital stay we noticed that you have some cognitive problems.
- 'Cognitive problems' is a term we use to describe the difficulties a person might have with their **thinking, learning, remembering, use of judgement, and decision making**.
- You may have been experiencing these problems for some time, or they might have happened because of the illness that brought you into hospital.
- It is not always possible to work out the exact reason and so we have asked your GP to refer you to a memory clinic.
- Once you return home you will be contacted by the memory clinic to arrange an appointment.
- This may not happen for a few weeks. This is to give you time to recover from being in hospital.

What have we done?

- While you have been in hospital, we began an assessment of your memory.
- This has included a physical check-up, blood tests and a review of your medications.
- Part of the assessment might include a routine brain scan. You may have already had this scan.
- If you have not had this scan, the health care team at the memory clinic can arrange it for you when you leave hospital.
- All these assessments will help us to figure out what might be causing your memory problems.



What could be causing my memory problems?

- Problems with your memory might be caused by a treatable condition, such as depression or an infection. They can also be a sign of dementia.
- If these problems are caused by dementia, getting a correct diagnosis is important.
- A correct diagnosis provides you with an explanation of your symptoms, gives you access to treatment, advice, and support, and allows you to prepare for the future.

Knowing the **type of dementia** (for example, Alzheimer's disease or vascular dementia) you have is important because it means you will receive the correct treatment.

To reduce your risk of dementia, you need to:

1) Be physically active

Doing regular, physical activity is one of the best ways to reduce your risk of dementia. It is good for your heart, your blood circulation, your weight, and your emotional wellbeing.

2) Exercise your mind

Regularly challenging yourself mentally builds up your brain's ability to cope with disease. You can try word puzzles, crosswords, dominoes, sudoku, card games, bingo, board games such as snakes and ladders and jigsaw puzzles.

3) Eat healthily

Eating a healthy, balanced diet may reduce your risk of dementia, as well as cancer, type 2 diabetes, obesity, stroke and heart disease.

4) Smoking & Alcohol

Ask your doctor for advice on quitting smoking or reducing your alcohol intake if you feel ready.

5) Stay involved socially

If you feel lonely or isolated, please speak to a member of the team who can help.

6) Take control of your health

Don't neglect your physical or emotional health. Attend health checks when invited.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information or support regarding memory problems or dementia, or if you are concerned about your referral to a memory clinic, please ask staff to contact:

Dementia Clinical Nurse Specialist - Tisenia (Tess) Alombro

Otherwise, you can phone **07717 701 202**.



Other information resources

Age UK

tel: 0800 678 1602

website: www.ageuk.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society National Dementia Helpline

tel: 0300 222 1122

website: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline

tel: 0800 888 6678

email: helpline@dementiauk.org

website: www.dementiauk.org

Join Dementia Research

www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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