

What happens during a memory assessment?

If you are referred, this may include:

- **Pre-assessment discussion:**
An explanation of the assessment, possible outcomes, and your consent.
- **Assessment:** This may include questions about your history, a memory test, and sometimes a brain scan. Bring a friend, carer, or family member for support and reassurance.
- **Feedback appointment:**
A follow-up session will be arranged to go through your assessment results.
- **Support planning:** Your healthcare team will talk through ways to support your brain health and outline treatment and support options, including post-diagnostic groups, medication, and carer support. These discussions will help you understand your choices and plan the next steps together.

Early help can make a big difference in accessing the right support.

Useful contact details

Alzheimer's Society:

T: 0121 706 4052

W: alzheimers.org.uk

Dementia Connect (Support through Alzheimer's Society)

T: 0333 150 3456

W: alzheimers.org.uk/dementiaconnect

Alzheimer's Research UK

W: alzheimersresearchuk.org

Silverline

T: 0800 470 8090

Samaritans

T: 116 123

W: www.samaritans.org

Birmingham Dementia Carers Hub:

T: 0121 437 0033

W: birminghamcarershub.org.uk

Dementia UK (Carers support):

T 0800 888 6678

W: dementiauk.org

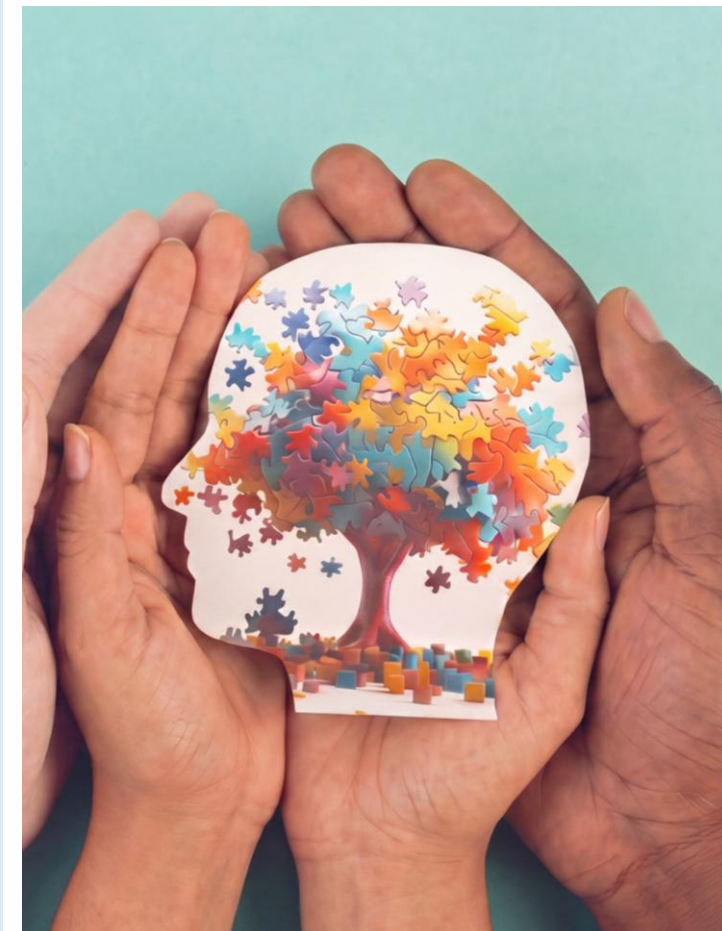
Main switchboard: 0121 301 0000

Website: bsmhft.nhs.uk

Ref: DEM0005A-062026



Memory Matters



Memory and ageing

As we get older, it is normal to notice small changes in our memory – this is a natural part of ageing.

However, more significant memory problems or frequent forgetfulness are not a typical part of ageing. If you, your family or a friend are concerned, it is important to seek advice.

Common causes of memory problems

Memory problems are common and do not always mean dementia. Other common causes include:

- **Physical health** – infections, thyroid problems, and low vitamin levels can all affect memory.
- **Mental health** – stress, anxiety, and low mood can make it harder to concentrate and remember things.
- **Sleep and tiredness** – poor sleep or ongoing fatigue can impact memory.
- **Alcohol or drugs** – these can affect memory in the short or long term.
- **Medication effects** – some medicines may cause confusion or forgetfulness.

Some of these causes can be treated, which may help to improve memory.

Normal aging	Possible signs of memory concerns
Forgetting things occasionally but remembering later	Forgetting recent information repeatedly or asking the same questions
Takes longer to learn new things	Unable to learn or follow new tasks
Occasional poor judgement	Regularly poor or unsafe decisions (e.g. with money)
Occasionally struggles to find words	Frequent difficulty speaking or understanding conversations
Sometimes confused about the day but figures it out	Gets lost in familiar places or confused about time/date
Loses track in busy conversations	Cannot follow conversations even without distractions
May feel less motivated sometimes	Withdrawn, distressed, or personality changes
Vision changes due to eye issues	Misjudging distances or misinterpreting what is seen

The Alzheimer's Society has a free dementia symptoms checklist available on their website:
[alzheimers.org.uk](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

Worried about your memory?

- **Talk to someone you trust** – family or friends may have noticed changes.
- **See your GP** – consider taking someone with you; they may ask questions, do a memory test, and arrange blood tests. Your GP will decide whether to refer you to a specialist or manage your concerns themselves.
- **Keep a symptom diary** – it's a helpful way to track daily changes and challenges.

Worried about someone's memory?

- **Start a gentle conversation** – choose a calm time, listen, and avoid criticism.
- **Offer support** – reassure them and encourage a GP visit (offer to go with them).
- **Share concerns if needed** – you can contact their GP and keep a note of any changes.
- **Support for you** – there are a range of local support groups and national charities that can help provide advice, emotional support, and practical guidance.