

Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD)

Self-Management Plan

- Multiple conditions can cause cognitive changes, so a full evaluation is important.
- Get the facts and become informed.
- If you notice memory problems, tell someone you trust (e.g., family, friends, loved ones).
- Have the important treatment decision conversation with your health care provider. There may be small changes in your medications that can decrease your risk of dementia.

Green Flags—All Clear



If you:

- Noticed age-related changes, and talked with your healthcare provider, and told someone you trust (e.g., family, friends, loved ones).
- Follow a healthy lifestyle-including getting regular physical activity.
- Thought about and communicated your choices and completed Health Care Advance Directives.

What this means ...

- Good work! We encourage you to continue having conversations with your health care provider.
- Continue health lifestyle changes that can prevent dementia: getting physical activity, engaging in brain stimulating activities, maintaining social connection, getting adequate sleep, having your hearing checked, and following healthy eating guidelines.
- Review and update advance directives regularly.

Keep up the great work!

Yellow Flags—Caution



If you:

- Notice a decrease in memory or having difficulty in recalling events.
- Have difficulty with daily activities or notice a decline in your ability to do your daily activities.
- Are increasingly forgetting to turn off stove or oven, burn pots and pans, forgetting to take medications, lose keys or other items frequently.
- Have thought about Health Care Advance Directives but have not completed the paperwork.

What this means ...

- You need a cognitive assessment to find out a cause or treatable disease.
- You may have early signs of dementia.
- Consider completing the Health Care Advance Directives paperwork.
- Talk with your healthcare provider.
- Talk with family, a friend, or someone you trust about your decisions and choices on health care treatment.

Talk your health care provider if having memory problems.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags—Stop and Think



If you:

- Have serious health conditions and a decline in your overall health that impacts your ability to perform your daily activities.
- Have no information about your advance care planning choices.
- Have not thought about what treatment you would want in the event of a serious illness.

What this means ...

- Consider “who will make decisions for me if I cannot speak for myself?”
- Seek assistance and support to have the important healthcare and medical treatment discussions.

Talk with your health care provider’s office about advance directives.

Name:

Number:

If you have a Red Flag, Plan now!

ADRD Fast Facts

Dementia is a decline in memory, language, problem-solving and other thinking skills. It is not a normal part of aging. The most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer’s Disease (AhLZ-high-merz), a progressive brain disease that results in loss of brain cells and function.

Warning signs can include:

- Memory loss that disrupts your daily life.
- Difficulty in planning or solving problems.
- Difficulty with doing familiar tasks.
- Confusion with time or place.
- Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.
- Problems with words, either speaking or writing.
- Misplace things.
- Lose the ability to retrace steps.
- Poor or decrease judgement.
- Withdraw from work or social activities.
- Changes in mood or personality.

Warning Signs of Alzheimer’s Disease or Dementia	Common Age-Related Changes
Poor judgment and decision-making	Making a bad decision occasionally
Inability to manage a budget	Missing a monthly payment
Losing track of the date or the season	Forgetting which day, month, year, and remembering later
Difficulty having a conversation	Sometimes forgetting which word to use
Frequently misplace things in illogical places, e.g., keys in refrigerator.	Losing things from time to time

What can you do?

Look into these resources to stay connected and informed.

- Washington Alzheimer’s State Plan: www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/stakeholders/alzheimers-state-plan
- Washington State Dementia Action Collaborative: www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/dementia-action-collaborative
- Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org
- Five Wishes: <https://www.fivewishes.org>

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County—plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County. For information about services or interpretation assistance, call 844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org.



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