# Alzheimer's Disease Assessment (Early Symptoms)

Dementia is a progressive deterioration of cognitive functioning and global impairment of the intellect. Alzheimer’s disease (AD) is one of the most common forms of dementia characterized by neuronal degeneration and brain cell death. Advanced age is a risk factor and early signs and symptoms include poor judgement and decision-making, difficulty having a conversation, the inability to manage a budget, losing track of the date or season, and misplacing things.<br />




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## Risk Factors

### Advanced Age

Old Age

Age is the most important risk factor for developing Alzheimer’s dementia. 44% of individuals between 75-84 years of age have AD. This is attributed to cumulative cellular damage, genetic predisposition, and amyloid-beta plaque accumulation in the brain, which leads to neural loss and synaptic dysfunction.

## Early Signs and Symptoms

### Poor Judgment and Decision-Making

Poor Judge and Bad-decision

People with Alzheimer’s disease often experience a decline in judgment, social awareness, and decision-making skills, which can significantly affect their safety and independence. As the disease progresses, they may become easily influenced by others, including strangers, due to a reduced ability to assess trustworthiness and impaired critical thinking. This makes them particularly vulnerable to exploitation, scams, and manipulation. Additionally, individuals with Alzheimer’s may struggle to dress appropriately for weather conditions or social situations. For example, they may wear a bathrobe to a grocery store or summer clothes in freezing temperatures.

### Difficulty Having a Conversation

Broken Con-versation

Language and writing difficulties in Alzheimer's are among the earliest symptoms and can significantly affect daily functioning. As the disease progresses, these difficulties become more pronounced, and speech, writing, and memory impairments may interfere with the individual's ability to interact effectively with others. Early recognition and intervention are essential in managing symptoms and improving the quality of life for patients with Alzheimer's.

### Inability to Manage a Budget

Can't Balance Budget

One of the early cognitive signs of Alzheimer’s disease may be difficulty with financial decision-making and money management. Patients may begin to spend excessive amounts of money on unnecessary or inappropriate items and may lose the ability to adhere to a monthly budget. This behavior stems from early impairments in executive function, particularly involving the prefrontal cortex, which governs judgment, planning, and impulse control.

### Losing Track of the Date or Season

Unaware of Season

A common early symptom of Alzheimer’s disease is disorientation to time, where individuals may occasionally forget the day of the week, the month, or what time of year it is. This confusion goes beyond normal age-related forgetfulness—it reflects a deeper impairment in orientation, a cognitive domain often affected in the early stages of dementia.

### Misplacing Things

Misplaced wallet

In the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease, individuals frequently misplace commonly used items such as keys, wallets, purses, glasses, or phones. While occasional forgetfulness is normal, Alzheimer's-related memory loss is more profound. Patients may not only lose items but also place them in illogical or inappropriate locations—for example, putting a wallet in the refrigerator or keys in a bathroom cabinet.

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