



# NEW HAVEN

ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

Serving TX Since 2013

FAMILY GUIDE

# DEMENTIA

## STAGES AT-A-GLANCE

By understanding the stages of dementia, you can be prepared to care for your loved one through whatever comes.



# EARLY STAGE

Early dementia is usually mild. Expect growing forgetfulness, confusion, and difficulty with complex tasks. Use this time to help independence last as long as possible and to plan ahead together for the future.

WHAT TO EXPECT	WHAT TO DO	WATCH OUT FOR
Working, driving, and other independent tasks are likely still manageable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gentle reminders</li><li>• Clear schedule</li><li>• Check-ins about important tasks</li></ul>	Missed bills and appointments can turn into big financial or medical problems if they aren't caught
Grief or fear about dementia diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compassionate listening</li><li>• Record important memories</li><li>• Join a peer support group</li></ul>	Signs of major depression like withdrawal, loss of enjoyment, or major changes in sleep or eating habits
Forgetting words, recent events, or names	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fill in blanks when needed</li><li>• Avoid shaming or embarrassing</li></ul>	Stress and anxiety about confusion can cause depression or hiding of worsening dementia symptoms
Anxiety about safety or what will happen in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address and remove home hazards together</li><li>• Plan proactively for the future</li></ul>	Anxiety that impacts daily life can indicate an anxiety disorder or progressing cognitive decline

# MID-STAGE

In mid-stage dementia, previously manageable tasks become more difficult. Be proactive and maintain a safe environment. Accidents, injuries, and infections are serious threats to a dementia patient; you can avoid these with attention and care.

WHAT TO EXPECT	WHAT TO DO	WATCH OUT FOR
Growing confusion and forgetfulness, especially with communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use simple, direct language</li><li>• Provide cues with clear body language and facial expressions</li></ul>	A sudden increase in confusion or forgetfulness can indicate a medical problem like an infection
Behavioral changes like agitation, aggression, wandering, or depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help calm and de-escalate</li><li>• Where possible, identify and reduce anxiety triggers</li></ul>	Denial can lead to injury, illness, or accidents when signs of a problem are missed
Struggles with activities of daily living (ADLs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assist with bathing, toileting, dressing, and eating as needed</li></ul>	Poor hygiene or eating problems can cause life-threatening complications
Safety concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dangerous items like knives may need to be put away</li><li>• Post a safety plan with emergency numbers</li></ul>	A senior with dementia may not recognize that they are making unsafe decisions. Falls, burns, cuts, and car accidents are a serious risk

# LATE STAGE

While we think of dementia mainly as a memory problem, late-stage dementia also affects the body. Advanced dementia patients and families find great support in our around-the-clock personalized care. The smaller community size and home-like environment at New Haven greatly benefits those in need of additional protection and attention.

WHAT TO EXPECT	WHAT TO DO	WATCH OUT FOR
Decline in physical condition and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physiotherapy and exercise</li><li>• Manage hygiene</li><li>• Position changes every 2 hours</li></ul>	Falling is likely for those who can still walk. Immobility can lead to bed sores, pneumonia, and other infections
Serious difficulty with speech or language comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use nonverbal communication</li><li>• Provide rich sensory experiences that stimulate all five senses.</li></ul>	Look at facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice to assess whether there is any pain, discomfort, or distress not being communicated
Difficulty eating and drinking; loss of appetite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adapt favorite foods to be easier to chew and swallow</li><li>• Add salt or sugar to improve flavor</li></ul>	Malnutrition, dehydration, choking, and aspirating (inhaling) food are life-threatening risks. Know how to recognize and handle emergencies
Loss of ability to care for physical needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learn safe lifting techniques</li><li>• Assist with toileting, bathing, and dressing</li></ul>	Cuts, scrapes, pressure, and poor dental hygiene can lead to major infections if not addressed early

## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

A dementia diagnosis affects the whole family. Make sure that self-care and emotional support for family caregivers is part of your dementia treatment plan. Look for support groups, respite care, and other proactive ways to reduce the emotional toll of caregiving.

With skilled and loving care, a senior can still enjoy happy, fulfilled, and healthy years after a diagnosis of dementia. Contact us today with your questions or to discuss our wide range of care options.

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