

MAPLEWOOD

Senior Living

NORMAL AGING OR DEMENTIA?

Memory complaints are common and their frequency usually increases with age. Do you ever find yourself walking into a room and wondering, “What was I looking for?” Inevitably, after giving up and walking away, it comes back to you. Did you wonder if you are experiencing memory loss? You’re probably not. The good news is that you are most likely overwhelmed, and like many of us, too busy.

As we age, we may need additional help with tasks from paying bills to purchasing groceries. A family member, friend or caregiver can help with these. However, if memory loss disrupts daily life, it is not normal aging and may require medical attention. So, how do you recognize the difference between “normal” aging and dementia? Consider the following signs to provide insight:

SIGNS OF AGE-RELATED MEMORY LOSS:

- Misplacing an item, such as keys or glasses
- Forgetting to pay bills on time
- Missing doctor’s appointments
- Repeating names or forgetting names
- Forgetting to take medications on time
- Missing meals from time to time

Keep in mind that as we age, it becomes increasingly difficult to take in, retain and learn new information. Try using tools like weekly pill boxes and calendars for appointments and due dates for bills, etc. You can also set up automatic payments and use notebooks to keep track of important items; even for recording meals and times.

SIGNS OF DEMENTIA:

- Getting lost going to the grocery store or place frequently visited
- Struggling to make conversation – can’t find the right words
- Loss of interest or no recollection of showering/bathing last
- Forgetting where they are going in their own house (e.g. using the restroom outdoors)
- Losing awareness of potentially dangerous activities, like leaving the stove on
- Touching a hot item – just out of the oven or off the stove – loss of realization that it could be hazardous to touch
- Taking medications inappropriately or not at all

If any of these signs or scenarios are occurring with your loved one, it may be time to meet with his/her medical provider. A lack of safety awareness as in many of the above examples, can often lead to very dangerous and even potentially life-threatening situations. We advise you to seek medical advice for suggestions or alternative care options to meet changing needs.

If you would like more information, please contact a Maplewood Senior Living community. Our knowledgeable staff of professionals understands and is here for you and your loved ones throughout the journey.

203.557.4777 | MaplewoodSeniorLiving.com

Connecticut: Bethel, Danbury, Darien, East Norwalk, Newtown, Orange, Southport

Massachusetts: Brewster, Weston, West Yarmouth

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