



## Common Signs and Symptoms of Dementia

*Dementia doesn't knock on the door with an announcement. It slips in quietly, almost unnoticed at first. The early signs often seem harmless, someone forgets a name, misplaces their keys, or repeats a question they just asked. We all do those things sometimes, right?*

But over time, the pattern becomes clearer. The changes become more frequent. And then they begin to interfere with daily life.

Here's what to watch for, whether in an aging parent, a spouse, a friend, or even in yourself:

- ✓ **Memory loss that disrupts daily life**  
This goes beyond forgetting where the remote is. It's missing appointments, forgetting familiar names or faces, or asking the same question over and over again.
- ✓ **Getting lost in familiar places**  
A person might take their usual walk to the shop and suddenly not remember the way home. They might not know what day it is, or what year.
- ✓ **Struggling with language**  
They may forget common words, lose track of what they're saying mid-sentence, or replace words with unusual ones. "Where is the hand clock?" instead of "watch."
- ✓ **Poor judgment and decision-making**  
They may dress inappropriately for the weather, hand out money to strangers, or fall victim to scams. Things they would have

once handled wisely may now feel confusing.

- ✓ **Withdrawal from activities and social interaction**  
Someone who once loved to cook or go to church may suddenly stop. They may avoid friends, stay silent in conversations, or become afraid to go outside.
- ✓ **Changes in mood and behavior**  
You may notice them becoming anxious, angry, suspicious, or even fearful of loved ones. They may cry without clear reason or suddenly become aggressive.
- ✓ **Difficulty with everyday tasks**  
Preparing a meal, managing finances, or even locking the house at night can become overwhelming. Routines they once managed with ease may now seem impossible.

At first, it's easy to brush these signs off: "*Maybe she's just tired.*" "*He's getting older, that's all.*" But deep down, we often know when something's not right. And that's why **awareness matters**.

Because when we recognize these signs early, we have a chance to plan. A chance to support. A chance to help the person living with dementia feel safe, respected, and understood before things get worse.

A timely conversation with a health worker or counselor can make all the difference. It gives the family direction. It gives the individual dignity. And it takes the pressure off everyone.

At **DementiaAware Kenya**, we encourage families not to be afraid of these signs - but to learn from them.



**Because when we understand what dementia looks like, we can meet it not with fear, but with preparation, patience, and compassion.**