

I can't find my keys again!



**Is this just forgetfulness that comes with age
or do I need to worry?**

Having concerns about memory?

You are not alone

40% of adults over age 65 experience some form of memory loss. Only 1% develops dementia each year. Sometimes family and close friends are the first to notice memory changes.



Here's where to start:

Forgetfulness can be normal part of aging. Both the body and the brain experience physical and functional changes with age. We often make jokes when we can't find the keys, or remember why we entered a room. Some challenges that arise from brain changes are more difficult to manage.

These include:

- Frequent difficulty finding words or recalling names. This happens as we chat with someone well known to us and suddenly their name “disappears.” Sometimes in everyday conversation a word seems to simply drop out of our memory.
- Challenges with multi-tasking. The multiple tasks of meal preparation become too difficult, especially when the phone rings and we lose our concentration.
- Decreased ability to learn new things. Knowledge gained in youth sticks with us, but new knowledge requires multiple repetitions. Becoming computer savvy is a good example of this difficulty.
- Frustration with things that once were simple. For example, “Has this calculator gotten harder to use?”
- Decrease in attention span. Can't follow the plot line a day after putting the book down? Attention span may be the problem.
- Increased irritability over previously insignificant events.



Get your printable memory decline worksheet:
www.cje.net/memorydecline

Ask yourself the following questions:

Are these new behaviors?

Are the behaviors just a normal part of my absent minded style?

Have these incidents recently increased to an extent that is concerning?

Is personal safety, hygiene or nutrition becoming a problem?

Paying deliberate attention to daily activities may decrease problems with memory. Slow down your day and focus on where you put your keys or glasses, or where you parked your car. Use a calendar, make notes, use cues such as leaving your morning medications near the coffee pot and your bedtime medications near your toothbrush. Be candid with yourself and trusted others about your concerns.

How do I know when to see a healthcare professional?

Memory changes can come from a variety of outside sources. Changes may stem from many sources, such as, medication side effects, infections, vitamin deficiency, UTIs or dehydration. Memory changes after undergoing a surgical procedure with general anesthesia may be the culprit. Looking into these problems with your healthcare provider is a good first step.



For some people, memory problems may be a sign of a more serious illness. If troublesome memory problems persist for more than three weeks, it is important to consult a professional. In addition to a physical and mental evaluation, a doctor may suggest a neuropsychological exam and other tests.

Don't delay. It may be nothing, but it's never too early to discuss these concerns with a healthcare professional.

How can CJE SeniorLife help?

We can refer you to the following CJE Senior Life supportive resources:

Your Eldercare Consultants—We work collaboratively with physicians, develop Care Plans, coordinate home care, guide families and find practical resources that support independence. Ongoing services are fee-based.

CJE Care Management—We make assessments, develop Care Plans and refer clients to free and low-cost services. Must meet financial eligibility.

Counseling Services—Our highly-skilled Licensed Clinical Social Workers are specialists in the field of mental health services for seniors. We offer individual, family and group psychotherapy, as well as support groups.

Consumer Assistance—We are resource specialists available to help you identify and apply for the broadest possible range of benefits and support services available to older adults.

Community Engagement—We provide education—geared toward your unique group—on well-being, emergency planning, physical, mental and financial health and many other subject areas.

To find out more about our many services and programs, Call CJE SeniorLife at 773.508.1000.

THE CJE ADVANTAGE: We offer a full continuum of care. Individuals of all ages, faiths and income levels can access life-enriching opportunities, resources and healthcare. Our Jewish values make us the provider of choice for enhancing lives and navigating the process of positive aging.

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CJE SeniorLife® is a partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community.

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