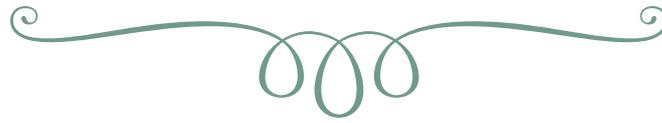


# How to get a dementia diagnosis



If you are concerned that you may be developing a dementia, it's important that you consult a professional.

If you are worried about a friend or loved one, encouraging them to see their GP is the best way to support them.

## Speaking to your GP: What to expect

Your GP will run a few simple tests, which will involve the doctor asking you questions about your symptoms, general health and any medication you're taking. This will be followed by a few questions that will - for the main part - assess your memory.

You will then either be referred to a specialist for further assessment, given a diagnosis (if the symptoms are related to a physical problem), or reassured about your health.

## Dementia specialists

Your referral is most likely to be with a neurologist, or someone who specialises in elderly or dementia care. If there is one in your area, you may also be referred to a 'memory clinic'.

They will probably run more tests, such as CT, MRI or PET scans, which examine brain activity, and may refer you for further tests if the results are inconclusive.

Again, it often helps to prepare for your consultation by writing down any questions you have beforehand.

## Receiving your results

Receiving a dementia diagnosis can be daunting, so it's good to take a friend or family member with you for support when you get your results.

Your GP will answer any questions, as well as explaining more about the specific type of dementia you have, how it may impact your life and the support and treatment available to you.

They will also talk family and friends to help them prepare and better support you, or suggest contacts that might be helpful.

If you are not offered the opportunity or do not feel able to discuss your diagnosis and what can be done to help you, always ask for another appointment.

Alternatively, you can seek help from the many advice lines that are there to help (like the UK-wide Alzheimer's advice lines or Age UK lines), from specialists such as Admiral Nurses, who particularly help carers, or from local self-help groups, where people with similar issues gather together. Memory clinics or dementia cafes are also helpful. Different areas of the country develop different approaches, but advice lines are often a good place to start.

As dementia is progressive, it's likely that you will have follow-up assessments in the future to see how the treatment and support is working for you and your family.

Talking to people who are going through or have already had similar experiences can be very helpful.

