

# WHAT IF SANTA FORGOT CHRISTMAS?

**REMEMBER  
DECEMBER** LOOK FOR THE SIGNS  
THIS CHRISTMAS

[www.rememberdecember.nz](http://www.rememberdecember.nz)



25  
DECEMBER

## Look for the 10 common early signs of Dementia

### 1 Memory Loss

You may notice subtle changes initially such as repeating the same story and asking the same question. Often their long-term memory will be good but not their short-term one.

### 2 Difficulty performing tasks

There may be a shift in their ability to perform familiar and everyday tasks such as cooking a meal, as well as difficulty multi-tasking.

### 3 Problems with language

They may struggle to find the right words or to communicate their thoughts and feelings. They may remove themselves from social situations to avoid making mistakes around others.



### 4 Disorientation to time and place

They may have difficulty knowing the time of day, where they are or need to be.

### 5 Poor or decreased judgement

They may appear confused and not work well under pressure, with difficulty in decision-making, problem solving and judgement.

### 6 Problem keeping track of things

They may have difficulty keeping track of dates and times, or any new information and rely on family and friends for memory aid.

### 7 Misplacing things

They may misplace items regularly and forget where they've put things.

### 8 Changes in mood or behaviour

They may experience an increase in feelings of anxiety and low mood, making them appear difficult, suspicious and defensive to others, sometimes people just behave oddly, be depressed or apathetic.

### 9 Trouble with images and spatial relationships

They may have trouble understanding special visual images (e.g. road signs) and spatial relationships (e.g. speed and distance) which can have major repercussions for their safety to drive.

### 10 Withdrawal from work or social activities

For fear of others noticing changes in their ability to manage, they lose interest in their work or hobbies and appear socially detached.



# What should I do if am concerned about myself or someone I know?

Confusion or forgetfulness may not mean someone has dementia but if you're concerned about changes in someone it's helpful to seek advice.

## Book an appointment with your GP:

1. Request a double appointment to allow plenty of time
2. Ask for a full physical examination
3. Write a list of concerns before the appointment
4. Go to the appointment with someone for support
5. Extra help with a diagnosis might be needed from a specialist
6. A diagnosis can take time, sometimes other possible causes need to be excluded first
7. Ask for a referral to your local dementia organisation

## An early diagnosis means:

1. Access to support, education and information to live well
2. Sets up a strong network of support
3. Allows the chance to plan for the future

## We are here to help

A dementia diagnosis will raise all sorts of concerns and worries, which is normal. We're by your side to help you, your family and whānau to live your best life.

- Information on dementia
- Keyworker support
- Navigation through the health system
- Education courses for carers and families
- Living Well services for people with mild to moderate dementia
- Support groups for carers
- Phone consultations

\*Services vary by region please contact your local organisation for further information.

**Get in touch - call 0800 433 636  
or email [support@dementia.nz](mailto:support@dementia.nz)**