

# **It's normal to forget, but sometimes it's important to look deeper .....**

## **When is it normal to forget?**

We all forget. Our memories are remarkable – faster than the most advanced computer – but we still forget things.

Usually, things we don't really need to remember, like what we were doing at exactly this time last year, last month or last week. Unless it was a very special occasion, it is unlikely we would remember.

We often forget the date or day of the week, birthdays, appointments or sometimes what we are doing.

Most of us have spent frustrating minutes (or hours) searching for keys, a purse or wallet, documents or a vital tool. It is inconvenient but we usually sort out the problems eventually and carry on.

This is all normal.

## **Forgetting becomes a problem when you notice one or more of the following:**

- you forget or lose things much more than before
- you lose the thread of conversations, or forget common words, or names of people you know well
- you get lost in familiar places, like where you live or work
- you get muddled or distressed more easily
- your concentration is not good
- your mood or personality changes – you worry more or feel depressed
- your sleep pattern changes
- you feel physically unwell a lot of the time

It can be embarrassing, and often people try to cover it up. It is not uncommon for relatives, friends or people at work to notice first. This can be frustrating and upsetting for you and them, especially when they urge you to see a doctor.

You may be worrying if this could be the start of dementia or Alzheimer's disease and what that might mean for the future.

**This does not automatically mean you have dementia.**

What most people don't know is there are many conditions that can **mimic** dementia or Alzheimer's disease. For example, anaemia, depression, thyroid problems, infections, stress. Even lifestyle changes like retirement, bereavement, moving job or home can cause some of these symptoms.

**This is why you need to see your GP and ask for a memory assessment.**