

# Dementia

Resources and support to help you live well



**phn**  
GOLD COAST

An Australian Government Initiative

It's easy to feel overwhelmed when you, or someone close to you, is diagnosed with dementia. You may experience uncertainty and may not be aware of the support available to help you live well.

Your local doctor (GP) can help you understand what may happen next, and how to find the information and help that you, your family, or friends might need.

This information booklet outlines where to find the services and support you may need now and into the future.

## What is dementia?

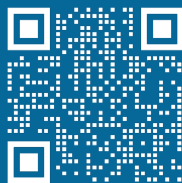
- Dementia describes a collection of symptoms caused by disorders affecting the brain. It is not one specific disease.
- Dementia can affect thinking, memory and behaviour. Brain function is affected enough to interfere with someone's normal social or working life.
- No two people experience dementia in the same way.
- It is essential to get a medical diagnosis when symptoms first appear.
- People often lead active and fulfilling lives for many years after their diagnosis.

To read more about dementia visit: [dementia.org.au/about-dementia](https://dementia.org.au/about-dementia)

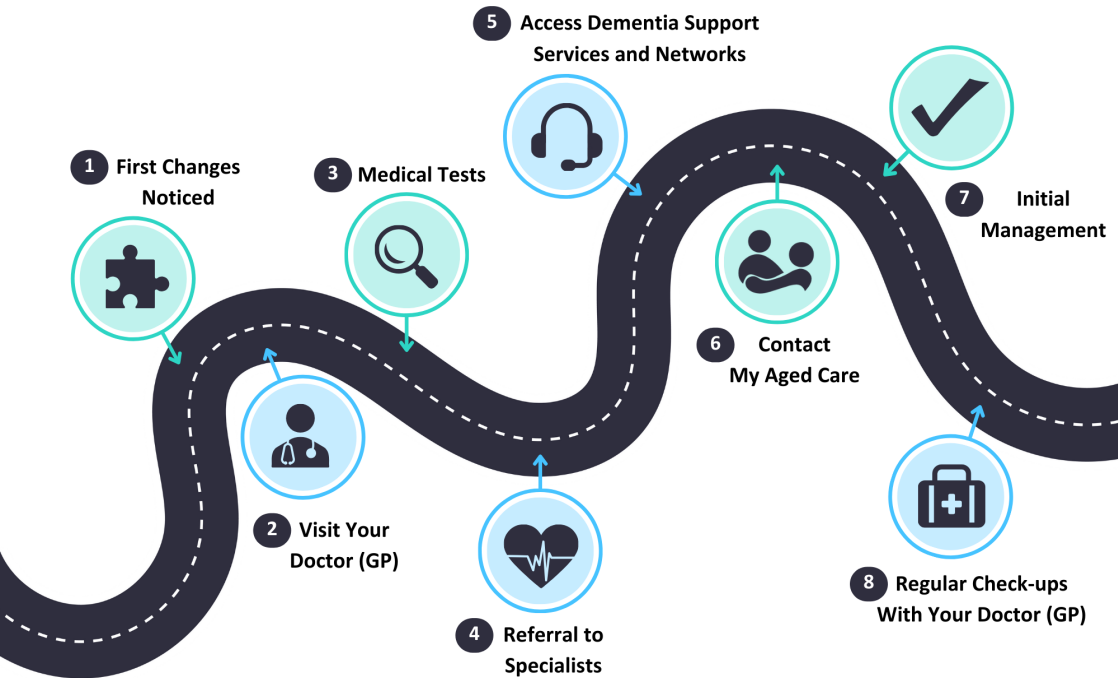
### Questions you may want to ask your doctor:

- What can I expect to happen in the next year, and next 3 years?
- What can I do to live well with dementia?
- How and what should I tell my family?
- What kinds of specialists do I need to see, and how much will this cost?

For more questions visit:  
[forwardwithdementia.au/article/what-to-ask-your-doctor/](https://forwardwithdementia.au/article/what-to-ask-your-doctor/)



# The dementia journey



- 1 First changes you may notice – memory problems, difficulties in word finding and thinking processes, changes in personality or behaviour, a lack of initiative or change in day-to-day function at home, at work or in taking care of oneself.
- 2 Visit your local doctor (GP) to determine the cause and significance of these symptoms.
- 3 You may need medical tests.
- 4 You may be referred to specialists.
- 5 Your local doctor (GP) will support you in accessing dementia support services and networks as part of ongoing care management.
- 6 Contact My Aged Care and organise an assessment to access funding and support – the sooner the better to avoid lengthy delays when you need help at home.
- 7 Initial management of your symptoms.
- 8 You may need regular check-ups with your doctor (GP) and specialists as changes occur.

## Services on the Gold Coast to support you:

Including:

- Help at Home
- Dementia Services
- Respite Care Services
- Carer Support



Visit [gcphn.org.au/community/older-australians/dementia-consumer-pathways/](http://gcphn.org.au/community/older-australians/dementia-consumer-pathways/)

## Helplines:



**Free call 1800 100 500**  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

No matter who you are or how you're impacted by dementia, Dementia Australia is here for you. We offer information, advice and support, no matter what your experience of dementia.



**Free call 1800 699 799**  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

This service provides confidential advice, assessment, intervention, education, and specialised support for carers.



**Free call 1800 639 331**  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

This service offers information and support for those caring for a friend or family member with dementia. Operated by healthcare professionals.



**myagedcare**

**Call 1800 200 422**

This service can support you through government funding to access help at home, social support, personal care, transport, health care and residential aged care.

Visit [myagedcare.gov.au](http://myagedcare.gov.au)



**Call 1800 800 100**

This service can connect people under the age of 65 who have younger onset dementia with necessary support and services to help them in their daily life, connect with their community and achieve their goals.

Visit [ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/am-i-eligible](http://ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/am-i-eligible)

## Support for carers:



**Call 1800 422 737**

If you support someone with dementia, you can find information, get support and access to services in your area and online at Carer Gateway.

Visit [carergateway.gov.au](http://carergateway.gov.au)

## Interpreter and hearing services:



**Call 131 450**

For if you need an interpreter to access health care online or at an appointment.

**National**

**Relay**

**Service**

**Call 133 677**

For if you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment.

## Your first month checklist

Activities	Completed
Book into Dementia Australia's Post-Diagnostic Support Program through the national hotline phone number listed in this booklet. A dementia specialist will work with you over six sessions to understand your specific situation, provide information and recommend support based on what is most important to you to adapt to change and live well.	
Learn more about your diagnosis including:	
what type of dementia you have,	
what drugs and non-drug treatments are available,	
what health professionals might be involved in your care.	
Book an education session with Dementia Australia through the national helpline listed in this booklet. You can learn about dementia and how to live well for as long as possible.	
Talk to your family and friends about how you are feeling. Contact a national helpline outlined in this booklet if you, your partner, or your family want to talk with trained dementia professionals.	
Write a list of services and supports that could help improve your quality of life. Think about things that could help you live well at home, keep healthy and active, and remain engaged in activities and hobbies.	
Register with My Aged Care or the NDIS to learn about services and support available that you may need.	
If you drive, tell your licensing authority and your car insurer about your diagnosis. If you need to stop driving, look at other transport options. This will help you remain active and connected with your family and community.	
If you work, look at your legal and financial options before reducing your hours or leaving work. If you or your carer need to stop working, ask Centrelink about available benefits.	



## Your checklist over the next 6 months

Activities	Completed
Connect with local Dementia support and services outlined in this booklet.	
Assess your home environment. Make modifications to help you adapt to changes to your memory and thinking and keep you safe.	
Assess your wellbeing. Keep your heart, body and mind active to look after yourself. Introduce exercise and healthy eating into your daily routine.	
Organise regular check-ups with your doctor, dentist, optician and podiatrist. Consider having someone accompany you to appointments to take notes and ask questions or ask the practitioner to give you some written advice.	
Make plans for your future. Consider any legal and financial matters, advance care directives, and medical and healthcare wishes.	
Start to plan for when you may no longer be able to live at home. Research your options and eligibility for residential care. This might include:	
- Having a My Aged Care comprehensive assessment.	
- Talking to Dementia Australia about options and what to think about when considering residential care.	
- Speaking with a dementia counsellor about your feelings and change in circumstances.	



### We welcome your feedback

Please scan the QR Code and complete the short five question evaluation survey

