

Getting the most out of the **appointment with your healthcare professional**

Healthcare appointments can feel overwhelming, but they're an opportunity to openly discuss your concerns and collaborate with your healthcare professional on next steps.

This guide aims to help make these appointments easier for you and enable you to engage confidently with your healthcare team.



Tracking and reflecting
your concerns and symptoms

Reflect on symptoms, whether they impact your daily life or seem like small changes and track them over the next few weeks. Making a note of these can better prepare you for your appointment.

These symptoms may include:

- Problems with memory
- Problems with language
- Thinking and reasoning difficulties
- Difficulties concentrating
- Challenges in planning, organising, decision making or problem solving
- Changes to mood
- Changes in movement

Date	Description of symptom	Severity Circle the appropriate rating (Higher numbers indicate greater severity)
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Tracking symptoms is important for early detection of any problems, and any changes in your symptoms will allow you to discuss these with your healthcare team.

Let's talk Dementia

List of current medications

Keeping a record of any medications you are currently taking, whether prescriptions or over-the-counter remedies, is important for your healthcare team to understand your situation better, allowing them to make the best decisions about any diagnosis and potential treatment.



Stock image

Medication name	Dosage frequency

Reporting side effects

Adverse events should be reported.

If you experience any adverse events, please speak to your healthcare professional immediately.

Adverse events can also be reported on the yellow card reporting site by visiting:

<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

Treatment options

Dementia presents a complex set of challenges, as its effects differ from person to person.

While there is currently no cure, there are various treatment options available that may help manage symptoms, slow the progression of the disease in some cases, and improve quality of life for individuals living with dementia.

Medications

- Cholinesterase inhibitors are available as oral tablets and transdermal patches (available in daily and twice-weekly applications) to help manage symptoms by boosting levels of chemical messengers associated with memory and judgement. There are multiple medications in this class, please talk to your healthcare professional for the best possible treatment option.
- Another type of medication that regulates glutamate, a brain chemical involved in information processing, learning, and memory, is accessible. It's available in tablet form and is sometimes used in combination with cholinesterase inhibitors for added benefit.
- Antidepressants are prescribed in some cases to manage symptoms such as depression and anxiety that often accompany dementia.

Therapies

- Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) involves group activities and discussions designed to improve memory, problem-solving skills, and overall cognitive function.
- Occupational Therapy helps individuals maintain independence by focusing on activities of daily living such as dressing, cooking, and personal hygiene.
- Speech Therapy assists in managing communication difficulties that may arise as dementia progresses.

Lifestyle Changes

- A balanced healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins may support overall brain health.
- Physical activity in the form of regular exercise helps improve mood, maintain physical health, and may even slow cognitive decline.
- Staying socially active and engaging in one's community can help stimulate the brain and improve overall well-being.
- Stress Management techniques such as mindfulness, deep breathing, and relaxation exercises can help reduce stress levels.

Let's talk Dementia

Navigating **your appointment**

By preparing for your appointment, you can ensure that the appointment is productive, informative and supportive of your healthcare needs.



Consider addressing the following questions during your appointment:

- 1. Can you explain the dementia diagnosis in more detail?
- 2. What treatment options are available for managing dementia, and what are the potential benefits and risks of each?
- 3. What dementia-related symptoms should be expected as the condition progresses?
- 4. What steps should I take if I notice changes in my dementia symptoms or if new symptoms develop?
- 5. How can I best manage my dementia symptoms to maintain my quality of life?
- 6. Are there any lifestyle changes I should consider?
- 7. How often should I schedule follow-up appointments, and what should I expect during these appointments?
- 8. Are there any recommendations for dementia support services and resources for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers?

Make your notes below



Area with 12 horizontal pink lines for taking notes.